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Becky Porter
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
ED268571

AN EXEMPLARY HIGH SCHOOL LITERARY MAGAZINE: WRITE OF FIRE

Compiled by

Hilary Taylor Holbrook

ED 268571
ORIGINAL

INTRODUCTION

In 1984, the National Council of Teachers of English began a national competition to recognize student literary magazines from senior high, junior high, and middle schools in the United States, Canada, and the Virgin Islands. Judges in the state competitions for student magazines were appointed by state leaders who coordinated the competition at the state level.

The student magazines were rated on the basis of their literary quality (imaginative use of language; appropriateness of metaphor, symbol, imagery; precise word choice; rhythm, flow of language), types of writing included (poetry, fiction, nonfiction, drama), quality of editing and proofreading, artwork and graphic design (layout, photography, illustrations, typography, paper stock, press work), and frontmatter and pagination (title page, table of contents, staff credits). Up to 10 points were also either added for unifying themes, cross-curricular involvement, or other special considerations, or subtracted in the case of a large percentage of outside professional and/or faculty involvement.

In the 1984 competition, 290 literary magazines received ratings of "Above average," 304 were rated "Excellent," and 44

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earned "Superior" ratings from state contest judges. On the basis of a second judging, 20 of the superior magazines received the competition's "Highest Award."

As a special project, the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills has selected 20 magazines from those receiving "Superior" ratings to serve as models for other schools wishing to start or improve their own student literary magazines. The profiles of these magazines are based on the faculty advisor's contest entry sheet, the judges' evaluation sheets, and interviews with the faculty advisors. Where possible, the magazines themselves have been appended. Information for ordering copies of the magazines is contained at the end of each profile.

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WRITE OF FIRE

Alameda Senior High School

Lakewood, Colorado

Principal: Ron Mitchell

Faculty Advisor: Becky Porter

1984 Student Editors: Laurie Troudt, Kelly Mateer

Stormy heart
Meets clean paper.
Restless hand
Raises furious brush.
Intense strokes
Create a masterpiece.
Quieted heart
Leaves stormy paper.

"Release" by Myra Schroeder
Alameda student and
Write of Fire staff member

Alameda Senior High School is a three-year public school located just outside Lakewood, a suburban Denver community of approximately 150,000 residents. The city is primarily working- and middle-class, and the school's 1,500 students come from ethnically diverse backgrounds. For over thirteen years the students at Alameda have been publishing Write of Fire, their literary and art magazine, (ten years in its present form).

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FORMAT: MANY CHANGES

The 1984 issue of Write of Fire was the eleventh volume for faculty advisor Becky Porter. During the first three years of Ms. Porter's tenure, the magazine was published in a variety of formats. In the first year, a scroll format was used, with parchment paper rolled around wooden dowels tied with leather straps. The second year, the magazine was printed as a calendar with writing and artwork above pages for the months of June through May. A record album cover concept was used the third year, with the body of the magazine tucked inside the slot of a cardtoard cover. In subsequent years, the magazine was published in book form.

Measuring 9 1/2" x 7" wide, the 1984 edition is perfect bound and printed on cream felt finish paper. The card stock cover, also in cream, is illustrated with a charcoal drawing of a flame. The original photograph that inspired the drawing is included in the magazine, the title of which appears above the illustration, in 20 point Goudy Extra Bold typeface. Within the magazine, titles are set in 10 point Goudy Bold typeface, with the text in 8 point Goudy Old Style. Photographs and artwork complement many of the poems and short stories. The 1984 issue also includes a 12-page cartoon epic. The dimensions of the magazine have been changed slightly since 1984, but the format has remained the same.

PRODUCTION: COMPUTERIZED

Prior to 1984, the Write of Fire staff met only after school hours. However, the bulk of the training and decision making is

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now done during class time in a creative writing course, although Ms. Porter admits there is still a six-week period just before printing during which she and the staff must meet in the evenings and on weekends to complete the final layout and paste-up. Usually the staff consistes of 10 to 16 students.

Staff membership is open to interested juniors and seniors in the creative writing class, although not all students in the class work on the magazine. Ms. Porter teaches writing during the first semester and focuses on the magazine during the second semester. She notes that "people's talents become obvious during the course of the semester," and those with leadership skills and artistic ability rise to the editorial positions "by concensus."

Except for the 1 percent of the proofreading done by faculty members and the typesetting and burning of plates for photography and artwork done commercially, the 1984 Write of Fire was entirely produced by students. Students prepared the mask-up of negatives for photographs and artwork, while all written copy was telecommunicated to the typesetter by means of an Apple microcomputer. Students then pasted up camera ready copy, and printed the magazine on the school's AB Dick 360 printer. This was the first issue printed by staff members.

SUBMISSIONS: LITERARY SOPHISTICATION

The staff uses a variety of methods to encourage students to submit works for publication in Write of Fire. In addition to "plastering the school with signs," staff members sometimes prepare a skit or present a spiel to individual English classrooms at all three grade levels. Daily announcements are

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also made during a three to four-week period, and English teachers frequently remind students of the opportunities for publication.

Authors' names are removed from submitted works, to assure anonymity during evaluations. Many of the publish entries, therefore, are by staff members. During the first semester of the creative writing class, Ms. Porter "tries to bring the students to a level of literary sophistication" with which she is satisfied by focusing on certain criteria for quality writing. Thus, buy the time the staff is ready to evaluate submissions, she feels they are capable of making the final decisions concerning which entries will be included. Ms. Porter concedes that the selection requires a "high level of objectivity," but she has a great deal of confidence in their judgment.

FUNDING: PRINTING AND PATRONS

Write of Fire receives approximately 45 percent of its funding from the school budget. Another 5 percent comes from the community in the form of donations in varying amounts from benefactors, patrons, and sponsors. To encourage such donations, staff members present the magazine to small businesses and individuals in the community, explaining the magazine's purpose and how the program encourages the arts. No advertising is accepted. Revenues from sales of the magazine make up the remainder of the budget. Production expenses amount to approximately $2,000 annually.

The staff produces the 48 page Write of Fire at a cost of $6.66 per copy for a print run of 350, and sells the magazine for

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$5.00 each. Expenses were reduced by printing the magazine in-house, and recently have been further reduced by using a computer printer, to eliminate the typesetting phase.

CHANGES: A HODGEPODGE

While 1984 was the first year that copy was sent via computer to the typesetter, 1986 was the first copy was sent from the computer to a Quiet Writer computer printer. Camera-ready copy was then assembled using this letter-quality print-out, thus eliminating the typesetting expense. The staff was quite pleased with the results.

Ms. Porter admits that production of the 1984 edition created a hodgepodge of problems. For example, the photography and artwork reductions were poorly done by the first contractor, and had to be redone by another. Also, the printer who was customarily contracted was no longer able to accept the contract. The staff has since changed to a small printing company.

In spite of these problems, the 1984 issue of Write of Fire is a remarkably polished publication. As the computerization of the production process becomes more efficient and the budget somewhat looser, the magazine's possibilities appear limitless.

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Copies of Write of Fire can be obtained from

Alameda Senior High School

1255 So. Wadsworth Blvd.

Lakewood, CO 80226

Cost: $6.00 (includes postage)

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ABSTRACT

One of a series of 20 literary magazine profiles written to help faculty advisors wishing to start or improve their publication, this profile provides information on staffing and production of "Write of Fire," the magazine published by Alameda High School, Lakewood, Colorado. The introduction describes the literary magazine contest (and criteria), which was sponsored by the National Council of Teachers of English and from which the 20 magazines were chosen. The remainder of the profile--based on telephone interviews with the advisor, the contest entry form, and the two judges' evaluation sheets--discusses (1) the magazine format, including paper and typestyles; (2) selection and qualifications of the students on staff, as well as the role of the advisor in working with them; (3) methods used by staff for acquiring and evaluating student submissions; (4) sources of funding for the magazine, including fund raising activities if applicable, and production costs; and (5) changes and problems occurring during the advisor's tenure, and anticipated changes. The 1984 issue of the magazine is appended. (HTH)

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WRITE OF FIRE

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Write of Fire

The Year of Our Lord
Nineteen-Hundred and Eighty-Four

Alameda High School
Principal, Ron Mitchell
Vol. XI

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Created and produced by
Alameda High School students

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Mr. Rex Kniss
Mr. Ron Mitchell
Mrs. Marilyn Sonnkalb

Cover art by Myra Schroeder

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Glen Beede

Cover idea inspired by Glen Beede

Best Copy Available

Two's Company

A blushing young bride named Marie,
Expanded her family tree.
When she wed one more beau,
Her first spouse thought it low;
She said, "I think it quite bigamy."

Laurie Troudt

Judge Psyche Presides Over Divorce Court

In a courtroom sadly too full by her standards,
Convicted faces full of red embarrassment
Seem to study details in the floor,
Their heads lowered in shame at the token vows
So easily spoken and forgotten.

She presides over them,
Astonished at their broken homes in mass production,
Passing judgement on them,
Justified by her love's infinite labor.

Mike Williams

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Above the Water

I stand gazing at the sea,
  into the reflected sky.
I long to jump in
  and soar among the clouds,
  and sing the Song of Innocence;
But, as I dive, experience takes over,
  and not the endless heights,
  of Innocence do I see
Instead, in the depths, beautiful, silent,
  seductive mystery.
My frame quakes with fear,
  in awe of the vast, compelling
  allure of the underworld.
And now, I find, I can't breathe.
I realize that he who cannot
  keep his head above the water,
  will not survive.

Terri Jordan

To The Sea

The sea is calling me—
Or rather, I call to it.
Yearning for salty winds
And the tug of the surf,
I flee to restless shores
Where I am spoken to with silence,
Reassured with solitude.
There, icy waters restore my soul—
A pagan baptism where
My purpose is renewed.

Kelly Coyne

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Confusion

Confusion
runs
about
in
my
head
like
a
cold
river
that
freezes
my thoughts and paralyzes
my actions,
makes me stumble
and fall,
freezes me,
pulls me to the bottom,
makes me cry for air.

Nicole Woodyerd

Dry Brooks

Something
is showing me everything I don't have,
like a brook that grows dry on an upward slope leaving
mud, grass and pebbles.
Something
is telling me how much I've lost, a kite of bright
colors caught in a mischievous branch.
Something
is telling me how good it is,
a thunderstorm leaving behind a clean fresh finish—
a new beginning

Nicole Woodyerd

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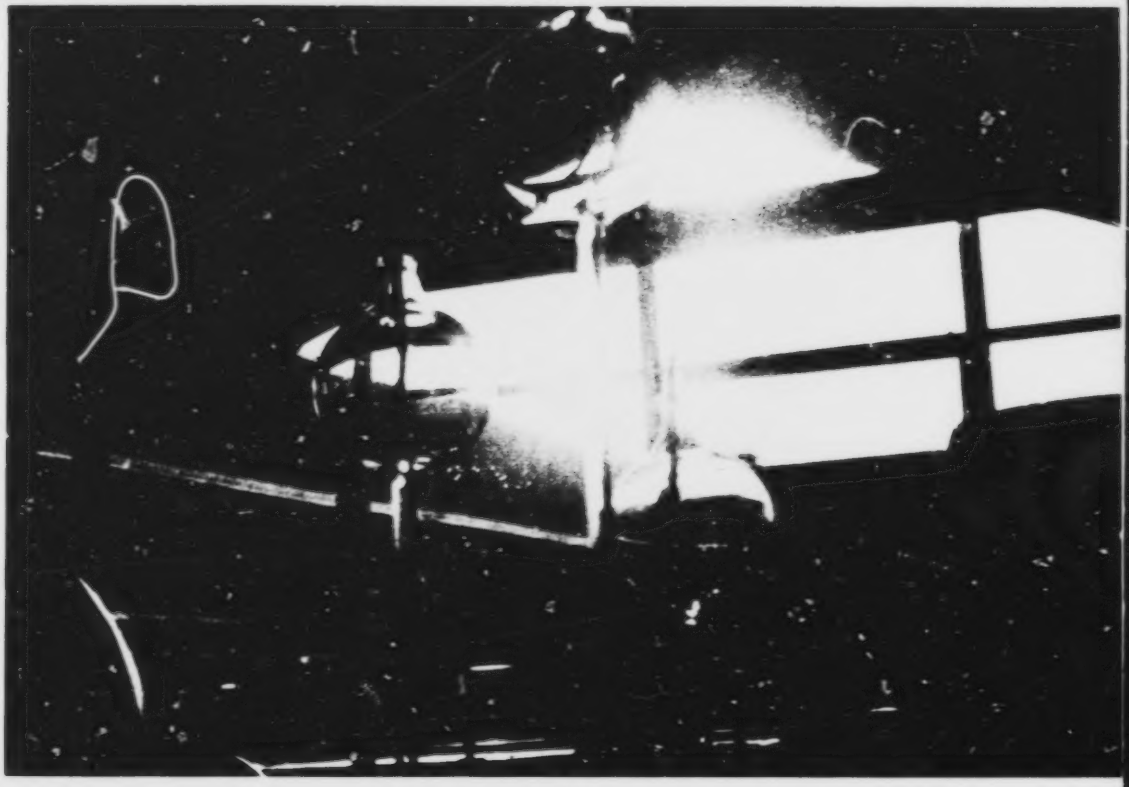

Linda Bliss

Of Sponge-Like Material

Joan Fiache sat sprawled out in the most comfortable chair in her house. It was big, brown plaid, and ugly, but it was cozy. Her parents were out at a movie, so she was alone. The television was on, but she wasn't watching it. She had all the lights out. It was completely dark except for the light of the TV. In her hand she held the letter declaring her acceptance to Melbourne College. She stared at the two plaques on the wall though she could barely see them. They were both awards she had won. One she received as the most valuable member of her school's newspaper staff and the other was awarded to the best journalist in the county. As she stared, she thought about the conversation she had with her parents a week and a half ago, when she received the acceptance letter.

"You know you can't pass this opportunity up, honey," said Joan's father, Mr. Fiache. "Their journalism department is definitely the best in the state and probably in this half of the country."

Joan drank in her handsome father's words and glanced out the window at the snow sparkling in the sunshine. She wished she could be out sledding with her friends on that Saturday morning. She turned to her mother for her reaction.

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"Joan, your father and I just can't tell you how happy and proud we are about your being accepted to Melbourne. And what's more important," Mrs. Fiache continued, "is that is where you want to go. I mean Bradford is a fine school and all, and it's nice that you were accepted there as well, but let's face it, that's not the school for you."

"Yeah, but Melbourne is so expensive. And besides. . ."

"Besides, Mary is going to Bradford, right?" asked Mr. Fiache.

"Well, you're right, it's not just the money. But Mary and I have been planning on going to Bradford together since we were freshmen. We promised each other we would room together in a dorm no matter what happened."

Mrs. Fiache brushed her short brown hair away from her face with her hand. "You aren't a fourteen year old any longer. You are a mature eighteen year old adult who has to start thinking about a career and about the real world. You must make good decisions for yourself now—not for Mary."

"Your mother is right, Joanie. And don't worry about the money either. It will be a struggle, of course, but we will certainly manage. Think about it very seriously, okay? It is definitely your decision. We just want you to be happy, now and in the long run."

Joan now adjusted her position in the dark after remembering that conversation once more. Her thoughts drifted to Melbourne College. It was a small, expensive private school about 120 miles from her home. It offered a nine-block year during which you studied only one course each month, were tested on it and then moved on to a different subject the following month. The journalism department was definitely the school's strongest department. The ratio of students to teachers was twelve to one. Joan loved that kind of individual attention when it came to her writing. Because she didn't know anyone attending Melbourne, and because of the school's strong academic focus, she knew it wouldn't offer much of an active social life, but Joan didn't thrive on parties anyway. She was a learner, an observer; she was composed of the sponge-like material that writers were made of. She was a diligent editor-in-chief of her school's newspaper. Melbourne was the perfect college for her type of student wishing to major in journalism.

"But a promise is a promise," she thought. "How can I just back out on Mary? She would hate me forever. Well at least for a good long time. She doesn't even know I'd ever even contemplate applying to anywhere other than Bradford. Honestly I don't know if she is really mature enough to handle college without me."

Joan continued to think about Mary. They had been best friends since fourth grade. They always used to get in trouble together for something or another and would spend hours giggling on the phone. They shared a special friendship. Things only began to get tense between them when Joan secretly discovered Melbourne the past spring. "Maybe I am just too ambitious. I'll get a decent education anywhere, actually, and Bradford College does offer a journalism major. Perhaps I'll go there for a year and if it doesn't work out, I can always transfer."

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With her newly proposed decision, Joan stood up out of the chair, walked over to the TV and gazed once more, with some anxiety, at her awards before turning off the set.

She walked upstairs, went into the bathroom, and brushed her teeth and washed her face. "If I lost about fifteen pounds, that would be just about enough," she said objectively to herself. She took the rubber band off that was holding her long, black hair in a ponytail, then retired to her room where she got ready for bed. Her room was very much a reflection of her inner self. Her bed was unmade and jeans were strewn over her chair and floor. She always had been a bit sloppy. She was too busy with other activities to practice tidiness. Several back copies of the school paper lay on her desk and dresser, while the articles she had written of which she was most proud were thumbtacked to the over-size bulletin board that hung on the wall opposite her door. The leather-bound, unabridged dictionary she received for her birthday in August was open to the letter "I." ("Impecunious" was the last word she looked up.) Joan folded down the blankets on her bed. She climbed in and soon was asleep.

Conversation was light the next morning at breakfast.

"How did you sleep Joanie?" asked Mr. Fiache.

"Great," said Joan. "How was the movie last night? Did you think it was as good as the critics did, or was it as boring as it sounds?" She blushed at her father's chuckle.

"Always so many questions," he chided. "Yes, we liked the movie. It wasn't too boring for us, was it Marge?"

"No, it was very entertaining. Drink the rest of your juice, Joan," she answered.

Joan rolled her eyes and drank her juice. She hugged her mother who was shorter than Joan who stood 5'6". She then kissed her father.

"Bye, Mom and Dad. See ya' after you get home from work." She went out the front door and let the screen slam behind her as she had done ever since she was a child. She threw her books in the back seat of her car, sat down, started the engine and turned the radio to the morning news. Then she drove to Mary's to pick her up for school. She was intent on enjoying every word Mary babbled about college. She made up her mind, and that was final.

When she reached Mary's she honked twice. Mary was watching out the window as usual and scurried out of her house to the car.

"Hiya Joanie. How's it going?"

"Oh, pretty good. How about with you?"

"Great! I went out with Tim last night. We just went to dinner but I can't believe Mom actually allowed me to go out on a school night. Oh well, it was fun. Guess what? I got a lot of information on the dorm situation. We have to start applying for the dorm we want. You should be getting all this stuff pretty soon too, but I want you to look at it during lunch today. I am so excited! I wish graduation would hurry up and get here!"

"Okay," said Joan, her heart sinking. "We'll talk at lunch."

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"Do you have to listen to this every morning?" asked Mary, referring to the news program on the radio.

"Hey, I like knowing what's going on in the world. You should listen too. We'll be out in it soon enough."

"Yeah, I know," replied Mary. "I'm glad that we will be going through the first four years of 'life on our own' together. I know I'm gonna need you to pull me through it."

The girls arrived at school and parted for the morning. The day lagged until it was time for Joan's journalism class which was her favorite.

"Joan, come over here. Great article on the new cheating policy here. The only thing I would do differently is get some more thoughts from the students. The angle you used is basically good, but remember you should always go for the best," the newspaper sponsor and journalism teacher, Mr. Brogue, commented.

"Thanks Mr. Brogue. I'll get on those extra interviews and have the article ready for deadline next week." Joan was elated. She loved that type of interaction and yearned for ways to improve her writing as well as for compliments on her style. She worked hard and felt these rewards were always very gratifying.

The bell rang for lunch and Joan met Mary in the cafeteria, which was drenched with the odor of the fresh coat of blue paint on the walls.

"Hi Joanie," said Mary. "Where do you want to sit?"

"Oh, just try to find an empty table somewhere, and I'll find you after I buy my lunch." Joan didn't understand how Mary survived the day without eating lunch. It didn't seem worth it to her even though Mary was skinny and pretty.

Joan bought her spaghetti lunch which she thought smelled only slightly better than the horrid paint fumes. She found Mary, who was leafing through her pocket calendar.

"Oh Joanie," said Mary, "aren't you excited? Graduation is only four months away! I cannot wait any longer! And next year will be fantastic. Here, look at this pamphlet on the dorms. Johnson Hall is close to the art school, but Stranton has its own dining hall. I think I like Fossman best, though, because it's co-ed and Darci told me that the parties in that one are always wild. I think that one sounds like the most fun—especially with all those cute upper classmen. What do you think about all of this?"

"They all seem fine to me," said Joan sadly. "How can Mary be so concerned about fun at college, and so uninterested in her education?" wondered Joan.

"Come on Joan, you don't sound very enthused about all of this. We have to get on the ball and decide where we want to live, or all of the good dorms will be full. And we don't have all that much time to decide what all we want to take with us. My parents have a cute little refrigerator they said we could. . . "

"We have plenty of time for all of that. I'll see you later, Mary. I have to go to my locker before fifth hour," Joan growled. She barely noticed the confused look on Mary's face, caused by her rudeness, as she got up and left the crowded, noisy lunchroom.

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Joan knew that there wasn't a lot of time for anything. She had to respond to the acceptance letter and let Bradford's office of admissions know she was coming. The more she thought of going to Bradford College, the more depressed she became. Her stomach felt tight at the thought of spending so much of her parents' money on a school that couldn't offer her half of the things she truly wanted. She slammed her locker door shut, but the extreme bang went unnoticed in the bustling hallway.

Joan went to math and to chemistry, but her thoughts were with Melbourne College. She had met with one of the professors on a visit there, and had been taken in by his philosophies on education. He brought the college, and learning in general, to life right there in his office.

The bell clamored, announcing the end of her last period. Mary still had one more hour left, so Joan drove home by herself every day. She retrieved the rest of her books and her coat from her locker, and slowly sauntered out of the building to her green Volkswagon bug. The ride home was a long one.

When Joan reached her large two-story home, she went inside and threw her things on the sofa in the living room. She walked into the kitchen where she poured herself a glass of orange juice. The house was empty because her parents had not come home from work yet. She pulled the curtain on the window over the sink shut because it was so bright in the room. Then she sat at the large oak kitchen table to drink her juice. She pulled one of the Melbourne brochures off of the little memo board above the table and looked through it for about the one-millionth time.

"Why wasn't I more up-front with Mary about Melbourne all along?" she wondered. "Things could have been worked out. Now Mary is ecstatic and I'm miserable. I've been so stupid, and have my parents upset with me on top of everything else."

Mr. Brogue's words to her in journalism class rang in her head like large, symphonic bells, ". . .remember, you should always go for the best." Melbourne was the best. At least for her anyway. That was it. Joan was going to go to Melbourne. She thought, "Mary and I have been best friends for a long time. She'll just have to be understanding, even though she is going to be hurt. This would be much easier if she were more secure, but maybe our distance will give her a shot at gaining some confidence. I'll call her after she gets home from school and let her know before this becomes even more difficult."

With renewed spirit, Joan got a piece of paper and a pen and began a letter to the admissions office of Melbourne College.

Kelly Mateer

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Patience like a tree—
tolerant, stong, enduring—
nourished from above

LuAnne Sugar

Laurie Troudt

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The Swan, the Monster, and the Brook

i come here at this brook of
words and ideas
to think.
i
see a beautiful white bird
with wings longer than
the sky.
it sings a wavering mystical tune.
that pure white bird floated along upon my brook
serenely until
that murky monster of slime, evil deception and
cruelty sneaked up behind the bird
and
bit
it
  hard
  in
  the
    neck,
and the bird was no more.
and the monster went under, quite satisfied,
and i was left with my brook of thoughts and ideas,
left alone
to think.

Nicole Woodyerd

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A Lady

A lady? One might ask, would do all this:
A cold plot against her ruler and king
That her husband would rule in bliss.
In the dark they killed and would not be seen.
Of course they had a safe alibi then
And escaped an evil guilt that was theirs;
They gave it to two innocent men,
And lived safe for a while without a care.
Work she had made seemed so easily done,
But in time they both would pay.
Hysterically mad she would die at home
And he would die an aging soldier's way.
Many innocent men would die in pain.
Sad—the lives she ruined, and all in vain.

Tony Czarnecki

Hatred's Reign

Hatred, an evil king,
Rises from his throne.
He bellows to his meek subjects,
Joy and Happiness:
"You are rebellious
and shall live in exile!"

Then, to his army of
Envy, Pride, Fury, and Spite,
"Arm yourselves;
Love is invading!"

Kelly Mateer

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High School Ladies' Room

There once was a young girl named Heather,
Who was not at all very clever.
She combed always the hair
On her head full of air
For at no task was she much better.

Mike Williams

New Brew

There once was a witch from the past
who saw a microwave, and said, "What a blast".
She put her potions in,
and said with a grin,
"Ooh! My newts' eyes and bats' wings cook fast".

Tony Czarnecki

The Zoo

A group of frenzied, excited primates bare fangs,
make faces,
and pound on the glass,
While the animals in the cages,
thoroughly bored by
this uncivilized floor show, yawn and fall to sleep.

Kelly Mateer

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EXERPTS FROM

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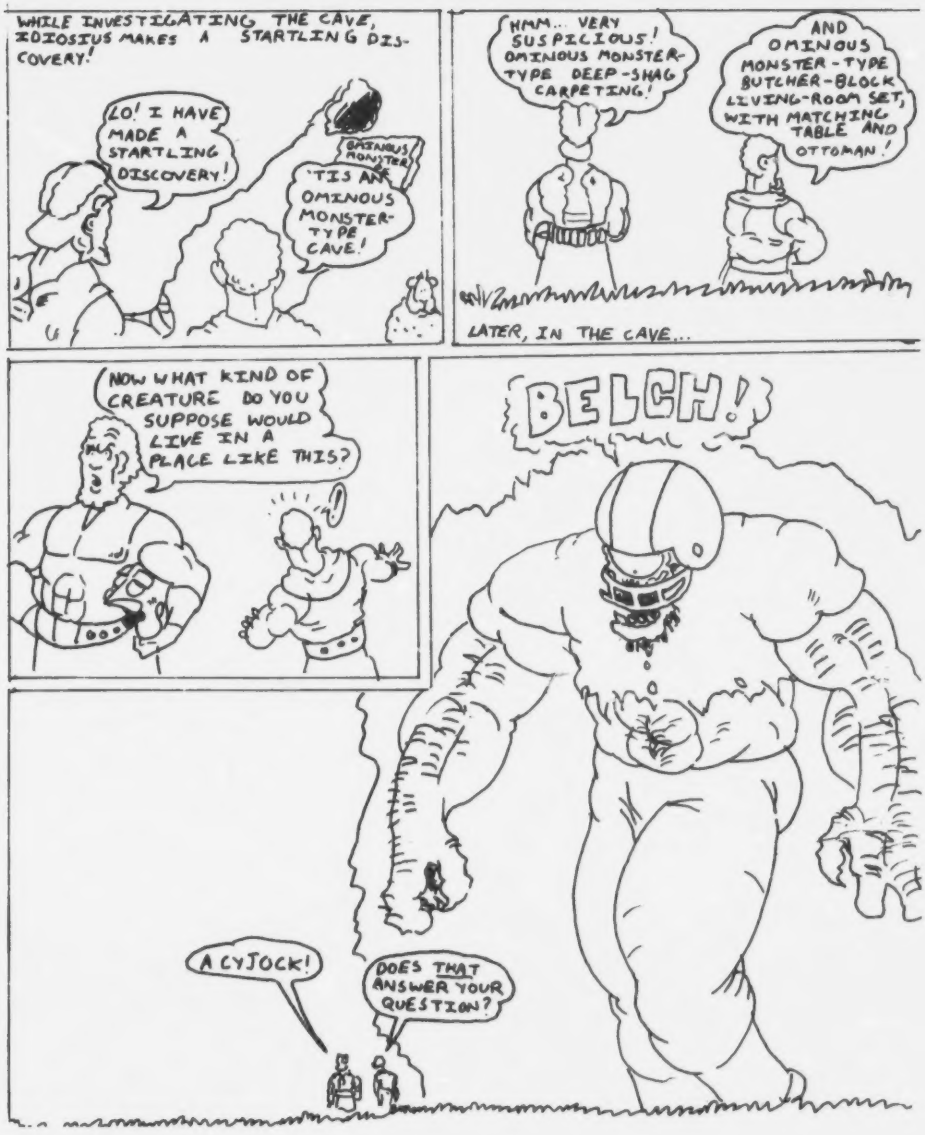
WHILE INVESTIGATING THE CAVE, IDIOSIUS MAKES A STARTLING DISCOVERY!
LO! I HAVE MADE A STARTLING DISCOVERY!
GASP!
OMINOUS MONSTER
'TIS AN OMINOUS MONSTER-TYPE CAVE!
HMM... VERY SUSPICIOUS! OMINOUS MONSTER-TYPE DEEP-SHAG CARPETING!
AND OMINOUS MONSTER-TYPE BUTCHER-BLOCK LIVING-ROOM SET, WITH MATCHING TABLE AND OTTOMAN!
LATER, IN THE CAVE...
NOW WHAT KIND OF CREATURE DO YOU SUPPOSE WOULD LIVE IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?
BELCH!!
A CYJOCK!
DOES THAT ANSWER YOUR QUESTION?

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AFTER THE GREEK'S SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE TOEJAMS, IN A WAR STARTED WHEN PRINCE TROY RAN OFF WITH HELEN TO PARIS, THE GREAT HERO IDIOSIUS LEFT FOR HIS HOME ISLAND OF JESSICA WITH HIS ARMIES. IDIOSIUS HOPES FOR A SPEEDY RETURN TO HIS HOME AND LOVELY WIFE, ANTELOPE. BUT THIS IS NOT TO BE, FOR, DESPITE THE HELPFUL ASSISTANCE OF THE WAR-GODDESS, ADEDA, THE SEA-GOD POSSESSION SEEKS TO WREAK HIS VENGEANCE ON THE HERO FOR ONCE CHEATING HIM AT POKER...

... IDIOSIUS, AND HIS MEN, DUE TO AN UNFORTUNATE MISREADING OF THE MAP, HAVE BECOME LOST AT SEA, AND EVENTUALLY COME TO THE SHORE OF AN OMINOUS, MONSTERTY. I ISLAND...

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WE GOTTA HIDE!
THERE! IN THE SIZE 122 EE PUMPS!
BAD IDEA! BAD IDEA!
THERE, AMONG THE SHEEP!
DIVE!
EEK!
SHUDDUP! IT'S A HIDING PLACE, ISN'T IT!
BAD IDEA, IDIOSIUS, REALLY BAD IDEA!
SHEEP DIP
HOW, HOW DO WE GET PAST JUNIOR THERE?

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WE GOTTA DIVERT HIS ATTENTION
WE CAN GET HIM ZONKED, WITH THE WINE WE BROUGHT!
NO! WE CAN GET HIM ZONKED WITH THE 33 POUNDS OF PURE AGEAN UNCUT FLAKE COCAINE! WE BROUGHT!
UH, RIGHT.
... SO THE WISE IDIOSIUS AND HIS TRUSTY COMPANION SPRINKLED THE SHEEP OF THE MONSTROUS POLY-ESTER WITH AGEAN COCAINE...
I LIKE IT!
AGHOO!
SHH!
... AND, 39 SHEEP LATER, HEROICALLY ZONKED THE CYCLOPS.
WUMP!
Y'KNOW, IT'S TOO BAD ABOUT HIS DRUG PROBLEM, THINK OF THE FORTUNE HE COULD HAVE MADE IN PRO SPORTS!

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31

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LET THE ANNALS OF HISTORY SHOW THAT I, IDIOSIUS, SLEW THE CYJOCK, POLYESTER, SON OF THE GOD OF THE SEA, POS-
I'M NOT DEAD
WHAT?
NOTHING! LETS GO!
I'M NOT DEAD!
HE SAYS HE ISNT DEAD.
YES HE IS. ANYWAY, LET THE AN-
I'M NOT!
HE ISNT?
WELL, HE WILL BE SOON, HE'S SERIOUSLY HURT
I'M GETTING BETTER
OH, NO YOU'RE NOT, YOU'LL BE STONE DEAD IN A MOMENT!
AND IDIOSIUS SAILED ON.
...SO ANYWAY; SEEING THAT THE CYJOCK, POLYESTER, HAD WOUNDED MY COMPANION, I DREW MY TRUSTY BROAD-SWORD, BETSY, STRIKING TERROR INTO THE HEART OF THE MONSTER.

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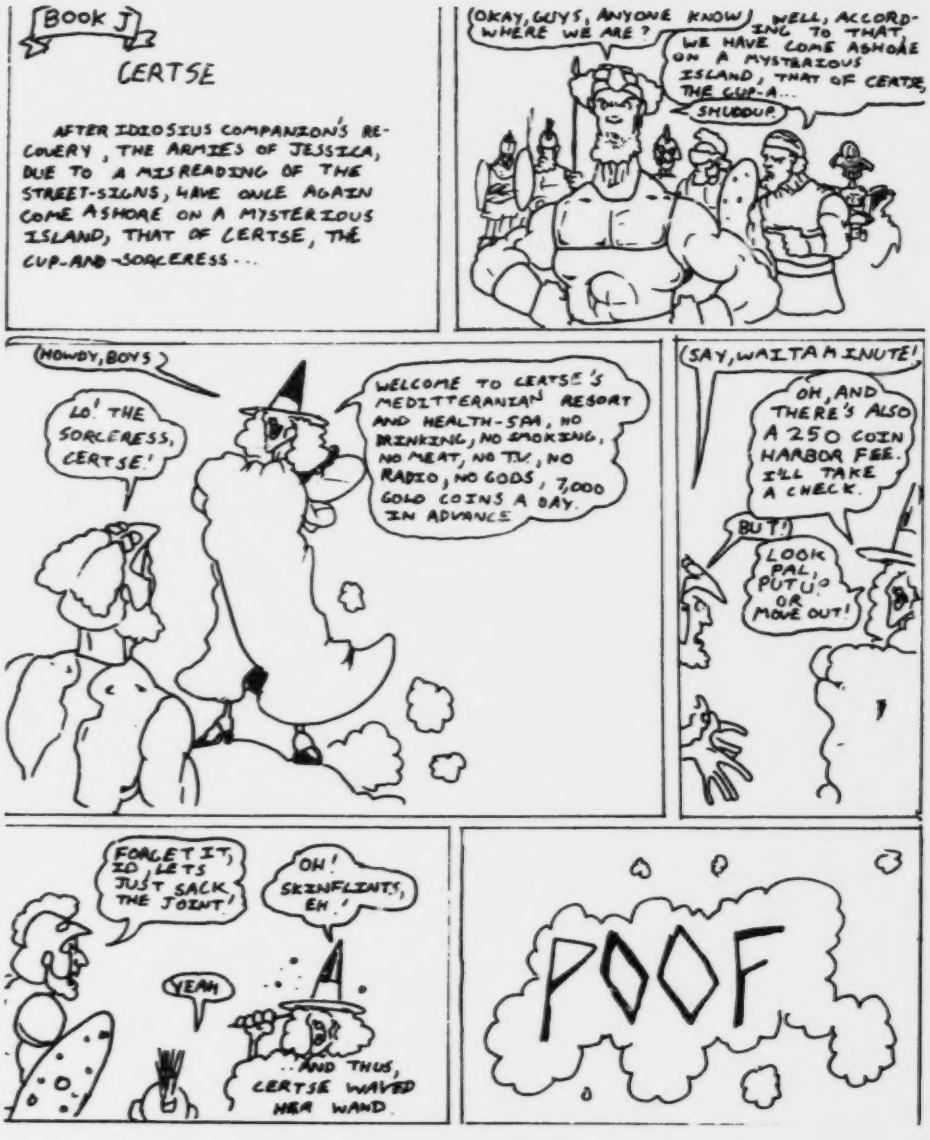
BOOK I
CERTSE
AFTER IDIOSIUS COMPANION'S RECOVERY, THE ARMIES OF JESSICA, DUE TO A MISREADING OF THE STREET-SIGNS, HAVE ONCE AGAIN COME ASHORE ON A MYSTERIOUS ISLAND, THAT OF CERTSE, THE CUP-AND-SORCERESS...
(OKAY, GUYS, ANYONE KNOW WHERE WE ARE?
WELL, ACCORDING TO THAT WE HAVE COME ASHORE ON A MYSTERIOUS ISLAND, THAT OF CERTSE, THE CUP-A...
SHUDDUP
(HOWDY, BOYS
LO! THE SORCERESS, CERTSE!
WELCOME TO CERTSE'S MEDITTERANIAN RESORT AND HEALTH-SPA, NO DRINKING, NO SMOKING, NO MEAT, NO TV, NO RADIO, NO GODS, 7,000 GOLD COINS A DAY IN ADVANCE
(SAY, WAITA MINUTE!
OH, AND THERE'S ALSO A 250 COIN HARBOR FEE. I'LL TAKE A CHECK.
BUT!
LOOK PAL, PUT UP OR MOVE OUT!
FORGET IT, ID, LETS JUST SACK THE JOINT!
OH! SKINFLINTS, EH!
YEAH
..AND THUS, CERTSE WAVED HER WAND
POOF

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...AND TURNED THE MEN OF IDIOSIUS' LANDING PARTY INTO PIGS (IDIOSIUS HIMSELF WAS MIRACULOUSLY SAVED FROM TRANSFORMATION).
FACE
I RESENT THIS!
AND SO, IDIOSIUS LOST A PARTY OF WARRIORS TO THE SORCERESS CERTSE.
FREEZE! POLICE!
EEK!
GO AHEAD, MAKE MY DAY!
LEAVING THE ISLAND OF CERTSE, IDIOSIUS AND HIS REMAINING MEN FACE THE HORRORS OF THE HIDEOUS SEA-MONSTER, SCILLY.
..AND THE SAVAGE WHIRLPOOL, CHARIBBAGE.
WHIRLPOOL
SPIN DRY
CONSUME
WEARY, THOUGH AND HIS FORCES DEPLETED, IDIOSIUS FORGES YET ONWARD.

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BOOK 1

KLEPTO

... AT LAST, IDIOSIUS, ALONE AND ADRIFT, COMES ASHORE ON AN ISLAND OF GREAT BEAUTY.

UPON THIS ISLAND THEIR LIVED A NYMPH, KLEPTO. KLEPTO, OF ALL THE NYMPHS, WAS ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL AND BUBBLE HEADED. SHE WAS LOVELY BEYOND MORTAL COMPREHENSION, GRACEFUL BEYOND BELIEF, AND MADE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL OF MORTAL WOMEN HIDE THEIR HEADS IN SHAME.

OF COURSE, THAT WAS A FEW CENTURIES AGO.

732 UNSUCCESSFUL MARRIAGES, 1300 YEARS OF DAY-TIME TELEVISION, AND 92 BAD DIETS HAVE MADE HER SOMEWHAT LESS RAVISHING (IN FACT, RAVISHED, WOULD BE A MORE APPROPRIATE ADJECTIVE) IN SHORT, SHE HAS GONE TO POT.

TO THE LONELY KLEPTO, HANDSOME IDIOSIUS IS A VERITABLE (MEM) GOD-SEND.

FOR 9 YEARS IDIOSIUS REMAINED WITH KLEPTO (THE BALL AND CHAIN MADE SWIMMING IMPOSSIBLE).

AT LAST HE SETS OUT FOR HIS HOME LAND.

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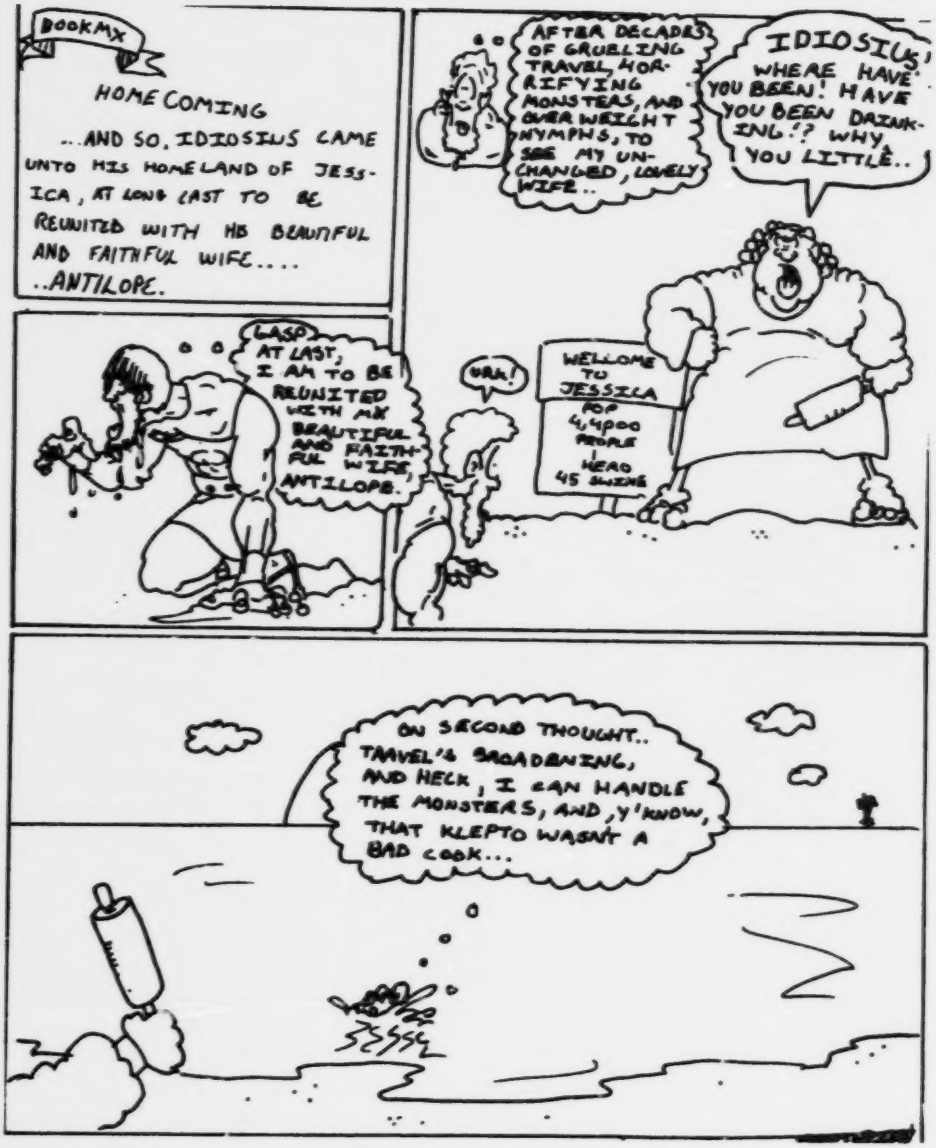
BOOKMX
HOME COMING
...AND SO, IDIOSIUS CAME UNTO HIS HOMELAND OF JESSICA, AT LONG LAST TO BE REUNITED WITH HIS BEAUTIFUL AND FAITHFUL WIFE....
..ANTILOPE.
GASP! AT LAST, I AM TO BE REUNITED WITH MY BEAUTIFUL AND FAITHFUL WIFE, ANTILOPE.
AFTER DECADES OF GRUELING TRAVEL, HORRIFYING MONSTERS, AND OVER WEIGHT NYMPHS, TO SEE MY UNCHANGED, LOVELY WIFE..
URK!
IDIOSIUS! WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN! HAVE YOU BEEN DRINKING!? WHY YOU LITTLE..
WELCOME TO JESSICA POP 44000 PEOPLE 1 HEAD 45 SWING
ON SECOND THOUGHT.. TRAVEL'S BROADENING, AND HECK, I CAN HANDLE THE MONSTERS, AND, Y'KNOW, THAT KLEPTO WASN'T A BAD COOK...

Randy Hirsh
Eddy Mueller

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Peter Deak

Kevin Capra

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Dessert

There once was a girl named Sophia
Who loved to eat sopaipillas.
She'd rather have honey
Than love or than money,
Now her stomach hangs down to her knee-as.

Kelly Mateer

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Depression

Clouded skies,
A quiet house,
Grass deadened by cold,
Stillness of night,
Dried leaves whipped to hard ground,
The work of yesterday's procrastination,
Is tomorrow's dues,
Geese flying south,
And slow passing time.

Gretchen Bauer

Linda Bliss

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Hope

Linda Bliss

Cold sky,
grey air,
desolation—
Tree skeletons
lift stiff, bony arms.
A lonely leaf
scuttles across
a stony gutter,
driven by
ghostly winds.

Sun warm explosion
of a warbler's song
shatters the dusky gloom.

Myra Schroeder

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Linda Bliss

Age

Looks through the fence at the
speed and grace of
athletes in their prime.
Brown fields stretch dying
where fall's destiny has stricken.
A feeling of futility, but wishing
to be able to run again. Now wrinkled
and old, like the brown fields, he
waits for his destiny.

James DuPriest

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Enemy

You are, and will be
a part of me.
You're my evidence of age,
my wrinkle maker.
Your fingers weave ravages of time
into my skin and soul.
You, Time, are like an old enemy
who deceives my power of youth.

Kathy DeWitt

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Kelly Coyne

Tossed Salad

Ingredients
- tomatoes (culture)
- lettuce (language)
- dressing (beliefs)

Mix.
Results?
One unique taste—as long as all the ingredients willingly mix.

Richard Ransom

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Behind Closed Doors

When the closet door is open—
the search for discovery,
the picking and choosing of the right image
matters not to the self, but to the others.
Like an actor,
the portrayal of roles comes easily.
Many faces,
many moods,
that each represents something that others
want to see.
But putting on these masks makes life so uncomfortable,
unnatural,
unnecessary.
An extended wear of the masks
brings the belief of what they can be
rather than merely a facade.
The true self lies dormant,
isolated,
forgotten,
and the closet door closes.

James DuPriest

Hypocrite

People will complain
because of distant threats.
People will remain
as long as they feel safe,
but people will abstain
as soon as danger strikes.

Tony Czarnecki

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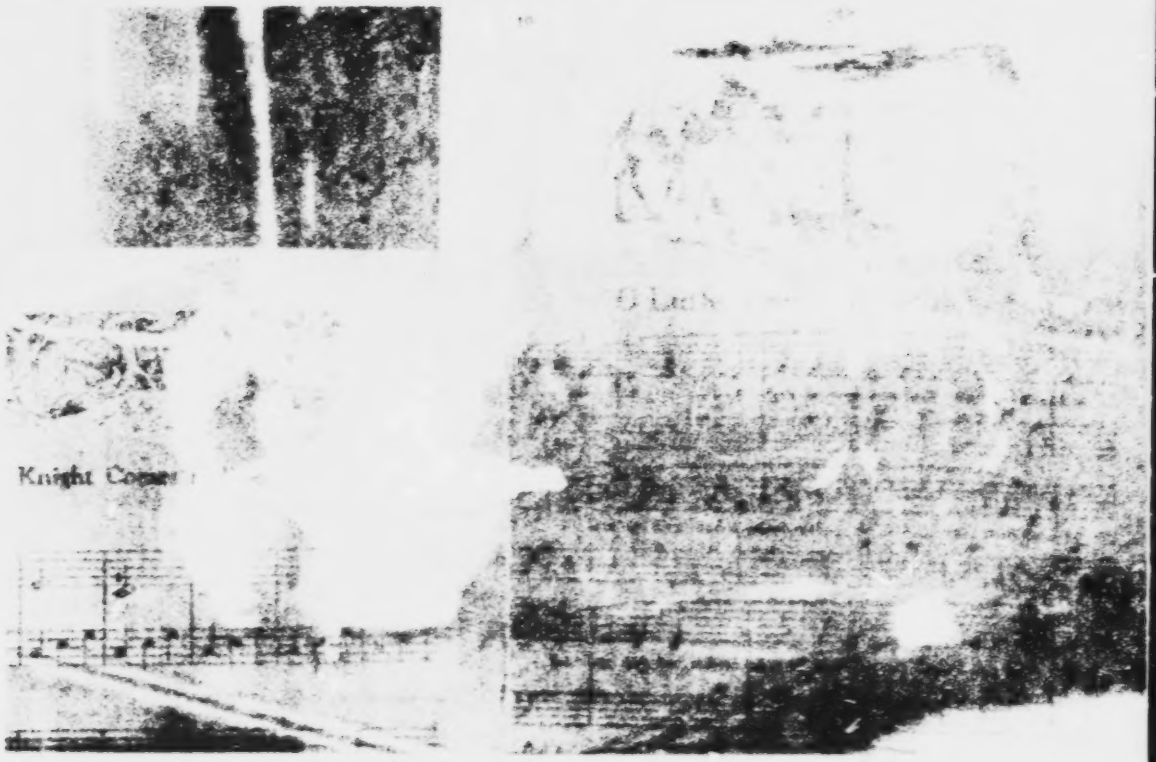
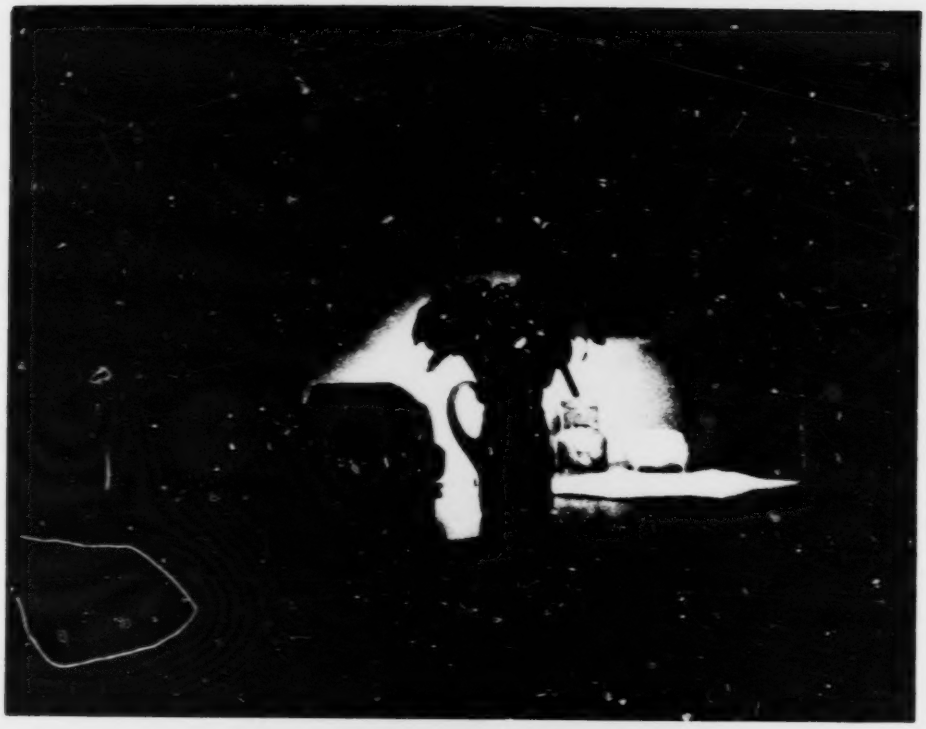


Anonymous Eloquence



Charla Haase

Homecoming

The Autumn wind bit through Susan's windbreaker as she plodded up the leaf-strewn walk to the large, split-level house. She stood on the cold cement porch, and rummaged through her knapsack for the key. It took her a while to find it, and she muttered a few choice words under her breath before she was able to slip it into the keyhole. Then she found the door was unlocked anyway, so she entered the living room, glanced around briefly at the dimly-lit room, and turned to slip the key from the keyhole again.

"Is that you, Susie?" The voice came from the kitchen, and a tall, stately woman emerged with a look of curiosity.

"Mom!" Susan started. Her mother usually wasn't home. "Hi." She started to move toward the staircase that led to her room, but her mother's voice stopped her.

"How was your day at school?" Without waiting for a reply, she settled herself in a rather large, handsomely upholstered chair and began to file her nails. "I had

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lunch today at Mrs. Flannigan's. She got new furniture, and I know she just wanted to show it off. I must admit it was beautiful, but ours is much more stylish."

Susan knew she was trapped. She perched her chunky frame on the edge of a stiff-backed wooden rocker and pretended to listen to her mother. Almost every day her mother had some news to tell, and she usually managed to be the closest available ears.

She looked again at her mother. She was in her forties, but constantly pretended she was younger. The wrinkles in her face were covered by an unnatural layer of make-up and rouge. Her hair was auburn with a dark, grayish-brown undertone where the dye had grown out. In spite of that, Susan knew she was a beautiful woman underneath it all. People said that her sister, Amanda, looked just like a younger version of her mother. Susan could see the similarities. Both had the same perfect nose, the same blue eyes, and the same slender figure. Susan looked more like her father, with her too-round face, boring, brown hair, and dull brown eyes. She wondered how she managed to have the same parents and be so unlike her sister.

"But you haven't told me, dear. How was your day?"

Susan knew this meant her mother had run out of gossip. She smiled a plastic smile. "Oh, it was fine, Mother—just fine." She held the smile frozen on her face until she could escape up the stairs to her room. She slammed the door behind her, and sat down on her bed. She had come to think of this room as her refuge. She had no choice, since she never went anywhere with anyone, and her room was the only place she could get away from Amanda. Actually, she didn't need to get away from Amanda, since she was hardly ever home. It seemed she was always doing something or going somewhere with friends. Everybody loved Amanda, but nobody paid any attention to her. A disgusted laugh escaped her. It seemed that Amanda was perfect in everything, and she was just as imperfect as Amanda was perfect.

Her thoughts were interrupted by the careless bang of the front door, and she knew Amanda was home from school. She heard Amanda's footsteps moving toward her door on the carpeted hallway. Susan groaned to herself, grabbed a copy of *The Hobbit*, and suddenly became absorbed in the seventh chapter. Amanda burst through the door.

"Guess what?" she exclaimed.

"What!" snapped Susan, not looking up.

The excitement in Amanda's voice changed to pleading irritation. "Oh, come on, Susan. Don't be such a spoil sport. This is absolutely, positively the most wonderful thing that's ever happened to me, and you don't even care."

"Well, tell me then." Resignedly, she gave her sister her half-hearted attention. "I'm listening."

The joy returned to Amanda's voice, and she said, "Darrin asked me to Homecoming today! He said—"

"That's great, Amanda. I'm really happy for you," said Susan flatly, as she resumed her reading.

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Amanda paused a moment before she said, "Well, I'll leave you to your reading if that's so important." She turned quickly and left. As Susan watched her go, she remembered when she came home excited about the "A" she pulled off in history. She had told Amanda in a rush, and Amanda had been almost more thrilled than Susan herself. Amanda encouraged Susan to keep trying to do it again. With her sister's encouragement and help, she was able to keep that "A" for the rest of the semester. Now, she had just thanked her sister with a deaf ear.

Amanda's voice on the phone in her room next door reminded Susan of the present situation. "Hello, Karen? This is Amanda. You'll never guess what happened!"

Susan threw the book across the room, where it slapped against the wall, and wrinkled the pages. Amanda was a sophomore. Susan was a senior, and this was her last chance to go to Homecoming, but she knew she would not be asked. "It's not fair!" she muttered.

It wasn't long before Susan's mother announced that supper was ready. Susan reluctantly descended the stairs to the large, elegant dining room where her family was waiting. She took her place across from Amanda, wishing for the hundredth time that she didn't have to look at her sister's smiling face through another meal. Her father's quick "Bless this meal, Amen" caught her off guard, and she bowed her head just in time to raise it and reach for a hot biscuit.

"Susan, mind your manners!" her mother scolded.

Susan flashed a scowl and grabbed the biscuit. She chewed on it and listened to her mother prattle on about Mrs. Flannigan's inferior furniture. Her mother completely dominated the conversation, interrupted only by her husband's half-hearted comments of irritation.

"Oh, and Amanda had a good day, too, didn't you, darling?" She slipped Amanda a knowing look. Amanda opened her mouth to announce her good news, but her mother interrupted. "It seems that Darrin, that handsome new football player, has asked her to Homecoming."

"I've never been happier in all my life!" Amanda's face lit up with anticipation as she said it.

"What about you, Susan—are you going to Homecoming, too?" her father asked.

Susan swallowed her bite of half-chewed biscuit, and the lump stuck in her throat. She began to cough—a half-pretended, half-genuine cough—as she choked on the "no" that she barely got out.

Susan's mother dropped her fork with a clatter and rushed to fret over her, since she was sure she would choke to death. "Are you all right?" she cooed as she fluttered around.

Susan managed to regain composure and respond. "Yea, I'm all right." Her voice was weak and shaky. "I think I'll go now. I'm not hungry any more." Amanda followed her and caught up halfway up the stairs.

"Are you sure you're OK, Sue?" Her tone was one of genuine concern.

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"Yea, sure, I'm fine," Susan muttered as she continued up the steps. She heard Amanda slowly make her way back to the table, where her mother had resumed her conversation as if they had not been interrupted.

"Mandy, you must have a new dress. Your old ones just will not do. Tomorrow we'll go shopping and—"

Susan closed the door to cut off her thoughts, but only the sounds faded. "It's not fair!" she told herself again. It seemed that Amanda had triumphed again. "No! She's my little sister. I wish there were some way to put her in her rightful place. I don't want her to get the best of me again!"

The family finished dinner, and a person Susan knew was Amanda knocked on the door. She waited a moment before she said, "Come in." Amanda entered, and flopped on her back beside Susan.

"Are you sure you're O.K., Sue? You look kinda depressed."

"I told you—I'm just fine."

With Susan's assurance, Amanda let the subject drop. She paused dreamily before she exclaimed, "Oh, Sue, I'm so happy! I just can't wait until the dance! Don't you think Darrin's absolutely, positively the most handsome, most terrific guy in the whole school?"

Susan saw her chance to spoil her sister's fun. "I don't know. I've heard some interesting things about him lately." She tried to sound casual.

Amanda sat up. "Like what?"

"Oh, nothing." Susan meant to enjoy her power while she could.

"Come on, Susan. What did you hear?"

"Well, rumor has it that he's going out with Janet. Didn't you know?"

Amanda didn't answer right away. Her face clouded as she mulled over these new thoughts. Then she said slowly, "They do hang around together, but I thought they were just good friends."

"Oh, Amanda, how can you be so ignorant? They're together all the time. He's with her more than he's with you."

"I don't believe you! He wouldn't do that to anyone!" Amanda said it with conviction, but the disturbed look on her face contradicted her dogmatic declaration. She stood and left the room quickly.

As Susan watched her go, she loosed the low snicker she had held in and an impish light flickered in her eyes. She imagined Amanda and Darrin as they walked down the halls together between classes. She could see Janet walk up and greet Darrin, just as she usually did. Of course, Amanda would take it wrong and explode at Darrin, and he would get mad at her for her lack of trust, and they would have a big spat and break up, and Homecoming night would not find Darrin knocking at the door to take Amanda to the dance.

She wallowed in cold-blooded anticipation of her sister's misery for a while, then she heaved herself to her feet and sauntered down the hall toward the living room and the television. She got as far as the door to Amanda's room. A muffled voice beyond the closed door stopped her walk.

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"Yea, well, thanks. I sure hope you're right." Her voice sounded strained. "Yea, bye." Silence weighed heavy on the air for a moment, and then Susan detected a quiet sniffling.

A sharp pang of pity for her sister ran through Susan. Misgivings and doubts played in her mind. She knew Amanda would never do such a thing to her. She remembered the time when Amanda got the main part in a skit in drama class, and she had to be on the stage crew. Amanda never rubbed it in. In fact, she even offered to trade parts with Susan, but Susan had refused. "After all, she is my sister," she thought. Then, she promptly reprimanded herself for those thoughts. "She's my little sister, and it's about time somebody put her in her place."

Less surely than before, she walked on down to the television, flicked it on, and flopped down in front of it for an evening of diversion. Her father was sitting in the easy chair reading, but Susan didn't take notice of him. She flipped from channel to channel by remote control from her slouched position on the couch. She finally settled on a re-run detective story.

Amanda slipped in quietly and sat next to Susan, and watched the television silently for a few minutes. Her eyes looked irritated. After a few minutes, she said casually, "Janet's going to Homecoming with Tim, according to Karen."

Susan froze inwardly, but retained most of her outward composure. Her eyes never left the face of the television. "Oh, really?" she returned.

"Yea. It seems they've been going together for a long time." Amanda bit her lip, then she turned to Susan and said, "You lied to me, Sue."

"What if I did?" Susan returned defensively as she set herself for a fight.

"I thought maybe, just once, you could treat me like a sister rather than an enemy." Susan kept a stony expression on her face. Amanda looked down. "I guess I was wrong. But you're still my sister, and I still love you. Nothing can change that."

Their mother interrupted them. "Amanda, you have a phone call."

With an effort to conceal her emotion, Amanda looked over her shoulder at her mother and said, "I'll be there in a minute, Mom." Her mother left, and Amanda turned back to Susan. She looked at her silently for a moment, and then she got up quickly and left.

Susan sat for a long time after Amanda and her mother left. She just sat, and stared at the television. Then, she felt the shame begin to creep up her neck and over her face. She wished she could go back in time and change things, and for once they were not things about her sister, but things about herself.

Her father lowered the book he had been reading with a puzzled expression on his face. "Is something wrong, Susan?"

The question brought her back to reality. The bright face of the television seemed to add to the heat in her face. She smiled quickly at her father. "No, nothing's wrong," she said, and escaped to her room, leaving the television's babble and her puzzled father behind. She heard Amanda hang up the phone in her room. Soon, Amanda knocked on Susan's door. Susan didn't think she could face her sister right then, so she said gruffly, "Nobody's home."

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Amanda was persistent. "I just wanted to know if you'd like to go shopping with us tomorrow."

"I told you—nobody's home!" When Susan heard Amanda's retreating footsteps, the feelings of guilt returned to plague her. She had done it again, and she knew it.

That night, sleep did not come easily. She tossed and turned, dozed, woke, dozed, and woke again. She sighed and looked at the clock. It was still only eleven o'clock. She knew the cause was internal, but she tried every possible external solution: a different position, more light, less light, music, and reading her chemistry book. None of them worked.

Finally, she slept from sheer exhaustion. Her restless sleep lasted until late the next morning, which was Saturday. In her half-asleep, half-awake state, she became aware at intervals of running water, the aroma of bacon and coffee, hurried voices, the bang of the front door, and the faint purr of the car motor. In the silence that followed, broken only by the rustle of the morning paper as her father read, Susan slowly awoke. She lay in bed, and tried to make sense of the sounds that came back to her. It took her a while to remember that they were going to shop for a Homecoming dress, and when she did, all the turmoil associated with Homecoming came back. She drifted into thought. Her plan of revenge had failed miserably, and yet somehow she felt glad. She had always told herself that she hated her sister, but she knew she couldn't quite believe that now. If she lost her sister now, she still wouldn't go to Homecoming, and she would be even more alone than she was.

She lay in bed for a long time for lack of anything better to do. Then, habit and boredom urged her to get up, so she sighed and obeyed reluctantly. Just as she pulled on her jeans and favorite grubby t-shirt, she heard the car's purr again as Amanda and her mother returned from their shopping spree. The front door opened and let the sound of excited voices rush into the living room.

Quietly, she put on her sneakers and tied them. She heard a sack rustle as it hit the floor, and Amanda's voice sounded. "We found one, Daddy! This is the dress I'm going to wear to Homecoming!"

Susan sat silently on the edge of her bed as her father's bored voice murmured and unintelligible response. Then, she took a deep breath and slowly walked downstairs. Amanda was holding a delicate, pale blue dress against herself like a paper doll's clothes. Susan was on the last step when Amanda looked up and their eyes met abruptly. The animated smile on Amanda's face faded, then returned awkwardly. She said timidly, "This is the dress I got for Homecoming." Susan didn't respond. "Well, how do you like it?" She spoke with more force now, and she turned so Susan could see all sides. When she faced Susan again, the exultant smile clumsily vanished and she asked, "Well?" Her hopeful eyes met Susan's.

Susan stood mute for a moment before she could say, "It's great, Amanda. You're going to be terrific at Homecoming."

Myra Schroeder

51
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For Celeste

I am a puppet.
Others use me
To do their will.
But to them
I have no
feelings—
As if I were
A puppet.
Always I have been.
They cannot see me
Otherwise.
I am easygoing;
I do
As they say.
But where does
That get me?
When I say
"enough"
They don't
(can't) understand
And they get
Angry at me.
What do
I do?
I feel like a
Rubber band
And I am
Afraid that
Someday
I
Will
Break.

Linda Bliss

52 BEST COPY AVAILABLE

An Observation

A human body—divine creation—
Functions complete
Despite imperfections of individual parts.

A body of humans—
Intolerant of difference—
Amputates imperfect members.

Laurie Troudt

Hello There

Hello over there.
Are they telling you
that we wish to bring you harm?
Do they say to you
that we are different
and we cannot get along?
Do you think we wear
funny clothes and speak
in funny voices?

We don't think you want
it so any more than we do.

They're telling us that you
are wrong; you don't make
proper choices.
For just a time, look real
close, we look the same as you.
We all have a heart, two eyes,
two ears. We're just in separate
places.
And we don't think you want
it so any more than we do.

Lori Fives

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Respectful Acceptance

Is an individual so cruel he can't accept others?
If this is true, the individual is insecure.
Acceptance is vital. Individuals are strong.
Is life so short a man can't change?
If this is right, a man is judged by what he was.
Change is necessary. Prejudice is harsh.
A man should ask no more and no less of others than what he can give.
Demands are futile.

Lou Scalmanini

Myra Schroeder

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Apathy

A girl of seven,
With partially canvas-covered toes
And a grime-smudged face,
Stands alone in the crowds at the station,
Watching busses depart,
Abandoned and without fare.
She screams for compassion
In a whisper from betrayed eyes,
Seen but not heard.

Oh, Apathy, rejoice proudly!
The passing people are not traitors to you—
So many hundreds, your obedient servants.

Kelly Mateer

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A Glowing Sunset

The intense colors of an evening sunset
Catch the glow of rose in the fire-like sky.
The dawn of a closing day
Escapes from the eyes of a meaningful watcher.
Anticipation of nightfall descends at the glowing edge of the horizon,
Just below the golden floating clouds.

Kathy Dillon

Linda Bliss

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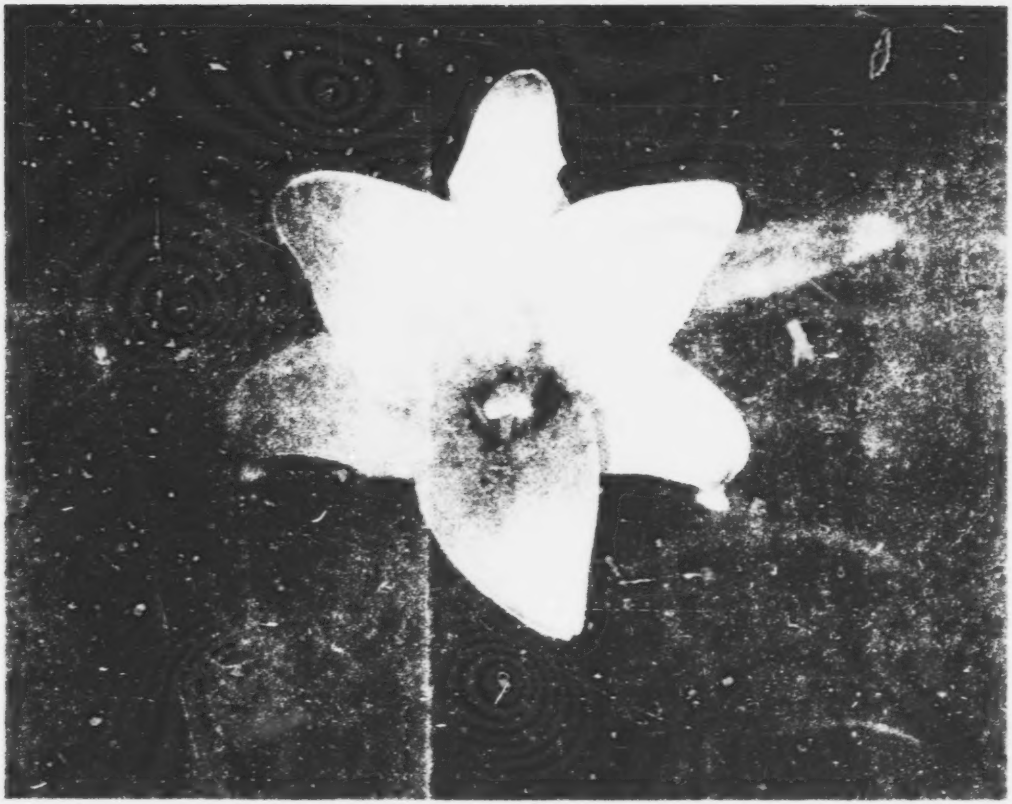

Hoto Hoti

Life

Quietly drifting
A white flower, modest,
Dandelion seed

Lynn Smith

Flowers

Splashes of color
Blowing in the wind,
Mountain wildflowers.

Lynn Smith

The Great Escape

Marcus lay awake in his sleeping bag thinking—not about anything in particular, just thinking. As Marcus was enjoying the quiet and serenity of the cool mountain morning the inevitable happened; Jack woke up. Jack Pliskin and Marcus Cranston had been best friends since the middle of the eighth grade, and in one week they would be receiving their high school diplomas.

"Up and 'atem," Jack announced with his usual hyper and energetic enthusiasm.

"Shut up! Sherman and Al are still sleeping," Marcus whispered, wondering why Jack always insisted on being as obnoxious as possible. They both got dressed in silence and stepped out of the tent.

"Why do you always do that?" Marcus asked Jack.

"Do what?" was the only response Jack could come up with.

"You know right well 'what'. Making an obnoxious ass of yourself and not thinking about why," Marcus had been putting up with this kind of thing from Jack since he could remember.

"Lighten up, Dude. You know that's my image. I'm the class clown, party machine, and all around wild guy. Believe you me, it's not an easy job either, but somebody's got to do it," Jack said sarcastically.

"When are you going to realize you're not in high school any more?" Marcus said as they both sat down at the picnic table that was in the center of a small clearing near the tent. "Once you get your diploma, class clown isn't going to mean anything any more."

"Would you get off your high horse! We came here to have fun, not to get lectured on life."

When Jack said this, Marcus realized the futility of the conversation. Marcus truly worried about what was going to happen to Jack when he met the real world face-to-face. "All right, I'm sorry." An apology was the quickest way Marcus knew to get Jack back on his side. "Let's get breakfast made."

They shook hands as they got up from the table and started walking over to the fire pit they had made the night before. Jack's mind was running wild. He couldn't believe they were actually doing it. "The Great Escape" was well under way. Jack had been planning "The Great Escape" for almost a month. "What an idea—Al, Sherman, Marcus, and me in the mountains for three days of no parents, no curfew, no homework. Just friends, fun, and beer for three days." Jack was truly pleased with himself for pulling this one off.

After about half an hour, Sherman and Al stumbled out of the tent. Sherman Hoover had moved to Jack's and Marcus' high school halfway through their junior year. All three were pretty good actors, and Sherman met Jack and Marcus during the production of the spring musical. When Al Kline got the lead part in the fall play, Jack, Sherman, and Marcus decided they better find out who this new

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Gretchen Bauer

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superstar was. As it turned out, all four got along, almost like brothers. "The Great Escape," as Jack called it, was kind of the last great adventure the four would share before they graduated and went their separate ways.

"You guys set the table and we'll have the grub ready in no time," Jack ordered as the two tried to adjust their eyes to the sunlight.

"Slow down, Dude," Al said, trying to speak coherently after eight hours of silence. "How 'bout a cup of coffee so I can wake up before I start on my chores?"

"Oh yeah, here you go," Jack said, handing Al a coffee cup. "No guarantee on this stuff. It'll probably come to life in your cup."

"Just so it's chock full of caffeine, I'm really wiped out."

"I can't believe this guy," Sherman loved giving Al a hard time. "You'd think he needed a cup of coffee to get his heart started. Tomorrow we're not going to make coffee and we'll see who can handle 'getting back to nature.' "

"Coffee's natural." Al was defending his vulnerable position as Sherman got the eating utensils out of the foot locker that served as the kitchen cabinet.

Sherman got the table set, with minimal help from Al, and Jack and Marcus served the breakfast that was obviously prepared by amateurs.

"You really expect us to eat this?" Sherman wondered what happened to the nice sunny-side up eggs he had for breakfast every morning.

"Seriously, I thought I had braved the worst when I finished that stuff you called coffee." Al was used to two nicely toasted pop-tarts for breakfast.

"Have either of you two tried to cook breakfast over an open fire?" Jack was upset. He had done the best he could and expected courtesy if not praise.

"Simmer down," Marcus took an objective look at the meal he and Jack had prepared and replied, "You two culinary geniuses get to try to do better tomorrow." This shut everybody up quickly.

"So what's up for today's activities?" Marcus felt an obligation to break the tension.

"We're going for the hundred club tonight!" Jack was excited about doing his favorite drinking game without having to worry about facing his parents.

"You're not serious," Sherman was getting tired of Jack's drinking game. "You've done the hundred club every weekend for the last two months."

The hundred club was a drinking game in which the object was to drink one shot of beer every minute for one hundred minutes.

"Come on Jack," Marcus was tiring of Jack's game also. "Don't you think you've done that stupid thing enough?"

"Hey you guys! What did we come up here for in the first place? To party, right? Well, what better way to party than by doing the hundred club? Oh, I guess you boys wouldn't know. None of you have been man enough to try it." Jack was trying to intimidate the guys into giving the hundred club a shot.

"I just know I've been smart enough not to make a slobbering drunk fool out of myself." Marcus hated it when Jack tried to pressure him into drinking excessively.

"I don't think you got the guts to even try the hundred club." Jack was avoiding

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the truth that Marcus had pointed out.

"Just drop it Jack," Marcus was always the one forced to keep tempers from blowing up. "Besides, I asked what we were going to do today."

"We all brought up our fishing gear and I saw some promising spots on the river driving up here. Does more need to be said?" Sherman loved it when he could be even slightly witty.

"Sounds good to me." Marcus had planned on at least two days of fishing on this trip.

"I'm game, how 'bout you Jack?" Al was feeling surprisingly well for having such a slow start.

"Far be it from me to object to spending a day burning our backs to a nice shade of crimson while trying to kill innocent little fishies." Jack actually enjoyed fishing, but he thought he would try a little retaliation.

The fishing trip went off well. All four of the boys caught at least one fish. Jack caught three very nice rainbow trout, but spent most of his time trying to persuade the other three to go for the hundred club that evening. Sherman caught eight, four of respectable size, and decided to try the hundred club to see if it would kill the pain of the prophesied sunburn on his back. Al was only lucky enough to catch one, but it was large enough to make a good meal. He decided to try the hundred club also. However, he didn't have a specific reason like Sherman; he just wanted to get really drunk.

Marcus was another story. Every time Jack would start his sales pitch for the hundred club, Marcus simply moved downstream to a spot where Jack's words were muffled by the sound of the white water. Marcus wasn't against having a good time; quite the contrary, he knew how to have as much fun as anyone. He just failed to see the point in getting drunk in such a way that caused extreme intoxication, an untold headache and nausea the morning after.

In the car on the way home Marcus said, "I'm not trying to play mommy here, but I hope you guys know what you're getting into. Eight beers in less than two hours often times has adverse effects on the consumer." Marcus also liked making attempts at wittiness.

"Would you quit worrying. We know what we're doing, don't we guys?" Jack was sure he would get the desired response from the back seat.

Marcus had made his decision and his point; he knew he had said enough. He was now hoping things wouldn't get out of hand while 'the guys' were getting schnockered.

The early evening went fine. Marcus beat Al in seven out of ten games of backgammon, and Jack fell victim, as he usually did, to Sherman's superior gin rummy skill. All the boys were pleasantly surprised at the job they did cooking the day's catch and had no problem about leaving any leftovers.

The time was upon them; it was too dark to play anymore games, and Jack's excitement was at a peak. Jack got two cases of beer and had Shermnan bring over four glasses. Sherman had been totally on Jack's side since they got back from

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fishing, and he also was very excited about the hundred club. The four were seated at the beat up old picnic table and each had a glass in front of him. Al was nervously picking at some of the paint that was flaking off the table. Marcus had turned his glass upside down and was glaring at Jack.

Jack popped open the first can of Budweiser and started to pour some into Al's glass. "Wait a minute," Al yelled, grabbing the glass and causing Jack to spill some beer. "How do you know how much an ounce is?"

"Simmer down Al, this is Jack Pliskin, party machine. I know what I'm doing. Now give me the glass and relax."

Jack finished pouring beer into Al's glass, then filled his own and Sherman's to the proper level. When it came time for Marcus' glass to be filled, Jack took the glass that Marcus had turned over, flipped it right side up, and poured in an ounce of beer. "Cute Jack, but you're wasting your time. I'm not playing this game of yours."

"If that's the way you want to be about it, fine with me. By the way, I hear Bored International is taking applications."

Marcus stood up and put his finger into Jack's chest, "If you want to play your silly games, that's fine with me. But don't start putting me down because I'm smart enough not to be suckered into doing something foolish."

Jack had no retaliation, mainly because he had always been intimidated by Marcus' height. Jack had often wanted to find out if short and stocky could beat up tall and skinny, but this wasn't the time or the place.

Fifteen minutes into the hundred club, Jack came up with a spiteful suggestion. What if he suggested a hike through the woods upon completion of the hundred club? This was the one; Marcus would become infuriated.

"What do you say we go on a night hike after we finish the hundred club?" Jack was anxious to see Marcus' reaction.

While Al and Sherman were contemplating the idea, Marcus very calmly stated, "You'll be lucky if you make it back to the tent when you're finished."

Jack was furious; he wanted Marcus to blow up. "I could run a marathon after I do the hundred club." Jack was ready to give his life to get revenge on Marcus.

"You couldn't run from here to your sleeping bag. Besides, you've still got to finish the hundred club." Marcus was through getting angry with Jack; his attitude was getting out of hand.

"I'll show you—there's a nice five mile hike I'll take you on when we're done." Jack was out to prove himself.

"What if we don't want to go?" Al wasn't sure if he would be up for a five mile hike after drinking over eight beers.

"Fine with me, but I'm going on a hike tonight." Jack was committed.

"We'll see what happens." Marcus knew how stubborn Jack could be when he wanted to be.

The hundred club continued, but it was twenty-five ounces before the tension was cleared from the air.

Everything was going fine thirty-five ounces into the hundred club. Jack was

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having the time of his life, Sherman was enjoying the effects of the alcohol, and Al was starting to really relax. Marcus had even opened up a can and was drinking it slowly. The cold mountain air was starting to have its effects, and Al suggested they take a little break so they could get their coats out of the tent. Jack was opposed to the idea because if they took a break it wouldn't be the hundred club.

As a token of friendship, Marcus decided to get everyone's coats. Jack thought of this as an apology for the argument Marcus had started earlier. Jack often misinterpreted things in such a way that they had a positive effect on him.

When Marcus returned with the coats, Jack couldn't resist asking, "Whaddaya say guy, do you want to start taking shots?"

"No." Marcus was trying to avoid another argument and decided to keep his mouth shut.

"Still gonna be a square peg, huh?"

Marcus gave Jack a questioning look. He hated it when Jack tried to press his luck.

The hundred club continued and Jack was loving every minute of it. At about fifty-five ounces, Al started having trouble sitting upright. Before he could take his eightieth ounce, Al passed out, face down, on the table.

"All right," Marcus declared, "that's it, the game is over. No more hundred club tonight." It was obvious that Marcus had been concealing his feelings about the game for at least the last thirty ounces; this was the first time he had said anything negative for more than half an hour.

"Settle down Marcus. Just because Al can't handle his liquor doesn't mean me and Sherm have to throw in the towel."

Marcus wasn't going to try to deal with Jack while he was drunk, so he decided to help Al get into his sleeping bag. Sherman offered to help, but Jack talked him into finishing the hundred club.

The last twenty ounces of the hundred club were frequented by Jack's groveling about what a pretty boy Marcus was. When it was all over, Jack let out a big laugh which was followed by, "So what do ya think, Sherm my boy, is that not one of the better ways to get plastered that you've ever tried?"

"Well. . .I guess," Sherman wasn't too coherant in his speech. "That's pretty wild. . .the hundred club, eh?"

"Yessirree, and to make things really exciting, we're going on that hike I was talking about earlier."

"Wait a minute. Hikes make you run out of breath. You can get. . .really tired. I don't think I'm going to, I'll just sit here and. . . ." At this point, Marcus came out of the tent.

"You guys done with your stupid game yet?" Marcus was hoping they were ready to sleep it off.

"Yeah, we're done," Jack stated proudly. "But we ain't finished. We're going hiking."

"You're crazy! You go out in those trees and you may never come back."

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"Yeah, I'm crazy, but I know how to have fun. Besides, this kid knows his way around the wooded hills up here; I ain't gonna get lost."

This statement from Jack worried Marcus because he knew how stubborn Jack could be, especially when he had a little too much to drink. "Sherman, you don't want to go on this hike, do you?"

"Not really, but. . ."

"You see Jack, you're gonna be out there alone. No one to talk to—you'll be bored." Marcus felt a strong need to keep Jack from going on this hike.

"I don't care; I'm going on a hike. If nobody wants to come with me, fine."

Marcus had to think, and fast. He knew Jack was liable to run off into the trees at any minute, because that's the way Jack did things—without really thinking. Marcus decided deception was the only way to keep Jack from making a fatal decision. "Jack, come here for a sec." Marcus didn't want to have to deal with Jack and Sherman at the same time. "Jack," Marcus whispered when Jack approached, "I'm going to try to talk Sherman into going on this hike with you. After all, this is 'The Great Escape' and you might as well live it up." Jack nodded his approval.

Marcus walked over to Sherman, who was still sitting at the table. "Sherm, if you don't want to go on this hike—and you shouldn't if you want my opinion--I'll take Jack out and see if I can't tire him out before we get too far away from camp." Sherman was more than happy to oblige.

Marcus returned to Jack. "Well, Sherm says he's too tired to go on a hike."

"That's fine," snapped Jack. "Looks like I go this one alone."

"No such luck." Marcus was determined for his plan to work. "I'm going with you. I was going to wait 'til tomorrow, but I guess I could handle a hike tonight."

It was very dark—the kind of dark when you shut off the lights in your bedroom and draw the curtain, and you can see just enough so you can get into bed without too much trouble. Jack filled his lungs with the brisk mountain air and set out with Marcus close behind.

"How far do you plan to go, Jack?"

"Far enough." Jack was still upset with Marcus.

"Come on guy, you might as well give me some idea of what I've gotten myself into here." Marcus looked behind him, and was comforted because he could still see the glow from the gas lamp that was on the table back at camp.

"All right, about three-hundred yards up the way there's a big patch of tree stumps, about fifty square yards of the things. I think there was a forest fire there a long time ago. On the far side of the patch of stumps there's a road. I've always wanted to know where that old dirt road goes."

"Hold on a second now," Marcus grabbed Jack's arm and turned him around. "I said hike, not a marathon. I think getting to the old dirt road is going to be far enough. The exploration thereof is uncalled for." Marcus loved to baffle Jack with profound phrases.

"We'll see what happens." Jack refused to give in to Marcus.

Marcus figured argument was useless, but he did start walking in stride with

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Jack. He figured if he could make Jack's short legs keep up with his long strides, Jack would be too tired to do any exploring of the old dirt road. The two remained silent and, except for Jack's heavy breathing, the sounds of the mountain habitat were all that could be heard. Marcus lost sight of the lamp he was using as a homing device, so he started concentrating on making the tracks he followed in a straight line.

They reached the patch of dead trees, and Jack sat down on a stump to catch his breath. Marcus did the same, and suddenly realized how tired the trek had made him. "Do you want to just head back?" Marcus asked.

"You said we were going to the road."

"Well, if you want to." Marcus didn't want to get Jack upset. He could tell the alcohol was really affecting Jack because he was having a hard time sitting upright.

"We'll go to the road, but then we're heading straight back." Jack agreed, and Marcus knew his plan had worked. Marcus' only concern at this point was whether or not they had gone too far already. Marcus decided to take it easy on the way up to the road so Jack could get his wind back.

When they reached the road, Jack was still a little winded; he was strong but lacking in the endurance department. "You see," Jack pointed out, taking deep breaths between every other word, "when I came up here once with my family, Dad took a wrong turn and we ended up on this one instead of the one directly in front of our property. Ever since then I've wanted to find out where this road goes."

"Well, maybe tomorrow." Marcus was eager to find out if they were going to make it back to camp in the darkness.

The trip back was downhill, and gravity helped Jack keep up with Marcus without as much strain. Marcus had been keeping an eye on the spot where they came out of the woods. It wasn't long before the tall, living trees cut off what little starlight the boys had had in the patch of dead stumps. As they walked through the heavily wooded forest, Marcus was encouraged because what little he could see looked familiar.

"There it is!" Marcus yelled.

"There what is?" Jack was trying too hard to keep himself from tripping to notice anything more than five feet in front of him.

"There's the camp. See that glow up ahead? That's the lamp on the table back at camp." Marcus' steps speeded up with anticipation.

"Slow down Marc." Jack had just got his breath back and wasn't interested in tiring himself out again.

"All right," Marcus wasn't planning on having Jack ticked off at him again. "I guess since we don't have a curfew up here we don't need to hurry home."

The boys made it back to camp all right and as Marcus was getting the lantern off the table he asked, "So, what should we do with the rest of the beer, Jack?"

"I guess we can save it till we get back to civilization." Jack wanted as little as possible to do with beer at this point; his hangover wasn't waiting until morning.

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Marcus was glad to hear that Jack wasn't going to try and be a "party machine"—for a while, anyway. "Maybe 'The Great Escape' wasn't such a bad idea after all," Marcus thought to himself as he stepped into the tent.

Lou Scalmanini

All Was Seen With a Closed Eye

A ruffled veil clouded the mind.
Silence was heard throughout the night.
Warmth and seclusion of a dented pillow
cushioned the beginning of dreams.
One lives in dreams
only when darkness falls.
Unconscious seeking brings gathered thoughts,
conceived only when in slumber.

Kathy DeWitt

Band-Aid Sheer Strips

Pinching sensation of medication,
Bites eagerly at a memory.
Limber strips of flesh-tone plastic,
Coated with an active adhesive,
Tug thin hairs out of their pores,
Leaving behind only the pattern of the bind,
And a hardened scar as evidence.

Gretchen Bauer

66
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Anger

A practical joke carried too far,
an action out of place, or
an unintentionally offensive word
becomes the sharp spade
that strikes the volcano below the skin.
It swells and seethes
until it overflows,
surging
hatred,
malice,
spite,
and more anger
onto those nearest.
A flood of
foul words,
violent actions
uncontrollable destruction,
and unmeant harm
leaves in its path
irreparable damage.

Myra Schroeder

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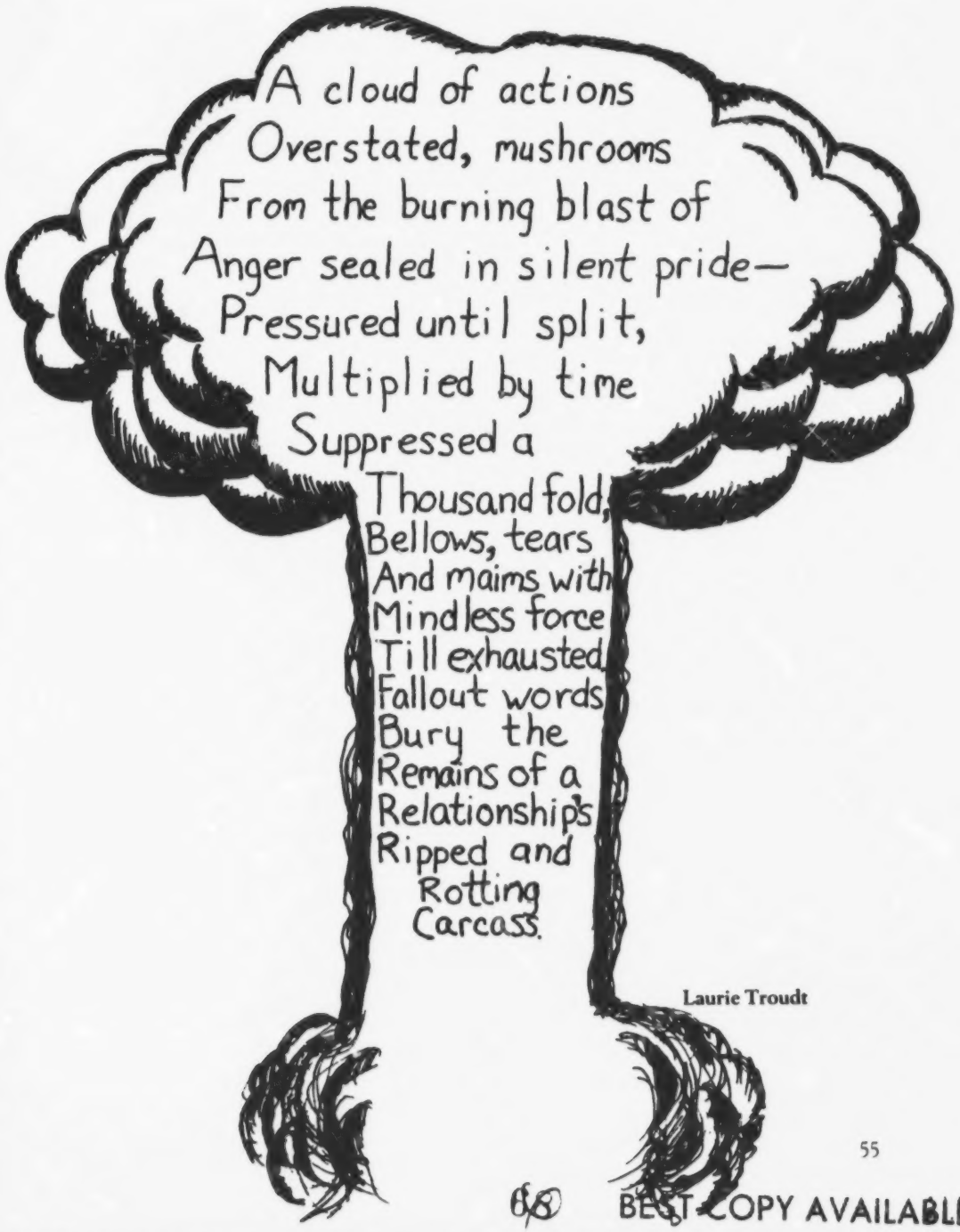
Communication Holocaust



Laurie Troudt

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Tentative Love

You don't want to fool yourself, risking
A love limited by time and confined
By your fear of being hurt. Refusing
To let friends close to you, you resign
Yourself to plastic relationships. How
Unfortunate we around you are! This
Pain is tri-fold, that of leaving us low.
Surely many tears will fall when we wish
You farewell, and regretfully we must
Part. We are, however, much the better
To have known you. When dust comes to dust
We will meet again. So please don't fetter
Yourself, denying the love in your heart,
For trying to spare the pain when we part.

Paula Balafas

A Heart of Insincerity

Can you sense the sorrow in my eyes?
Hear the pain in my pitiful cries;
Cherished friendship neglected and lost
By you. Your flighty, fickle heart doth
Commit temporarily to one;
When your needs are satisfied you run
To another heart that is lonely
For a friend which one can call his own.
Pity the fool that falls in your trap!
You take one's heart leaving a large gap,
An abyss. Such is love, such is life.
Friendship can be a two-sided knife.
One always loses fake plastic friends
But the hardened heart will never mend.
Greater distrust with every loss
Of friendship; the result is a gross
Vision of black pain and bleeding hope.
With this disillusion can we cope?

Paula Balafas

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The Succubus

You must beware, look not into her eyes,
All men soon melt beneath that fiery glance;
Lured in with wit and charm, you have no chance.
When eyes with hers do meet all hope shall die.
You can't resist her spell although you'll try.
The more you wish she'd go, the more her trance
will wrap around your heart and make you dance.
She'll let you wish, but freedom she'll deny.
"Carpe diem," she'll say; your heart's run through.
She'll shower you with love that isn't real.
Intoxicated with her lies you'll fall.
But through the mist you'll see that it's not true;
The tempest clears your mind and you will feel
Alone, and all too late away you'll crawl.

Jim Mance

A Melancholy Fool

I sit and stare at all the clouds above
And wonder what the shapes could ever mean.
I see a dog, and then I see a queen,
And when the wind decides to change, a dove
I see, that represents the feeling love
And all the things that I have ever seen
When sitting softly on the grass so green.
Then suddenly I feel a little shove.
The wind is gently tugging at my sleeve.
A rare fragment causes me a leaf
Falls slowly to the ground. The breeze is cool
And so the clouds proceed to move. I lie
Here lost in thought, a melancholy fool.
No visions but to stay until I die.

Renee Pawlish

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Father

He reads the daily news
As he bends over morning coffee.
Its odor drifts from the kitchen
To her room (her well-equipped sanctuary).
She smells the seeming bitterness
Of his disciplinary words
And it's-all-for-your-own-good orders.
If he could only love her less.

Kelly Mateer

Americanism

Many men have suffered from the pain and fear
Of the nights to come. Endless days rage on
With thoughts too embellished to shed a tear.
The fight in their hearts seems to be gone.
Men hang their heads in the heat that will sear,
Wishing to be lounging on the back lawn
Of home. Another blast, scramble for gear.
Bombing continues until the new dawn.
The generals parade around with new hats,
As the men fight and die for a lost cause.
Bodies get sent home to the sound of taps,
While Congress fights over a list of new laws.
Let our object be our country in need,
For what can war but endless war still breed?

James DuPriest

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Myra Schroeder

"Professing to be Wise"

Created
in the image
of God,
he creates
a stone-hearted god
in the image
of himself
and worships
its creator.

Myra Schroeder

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X-mas

A model of the Holy Scene
In porcelain and wood
Declares in humble stillness
The prayer on the infant's lips—
"Peace and good will towards men"—
But goes unnoticed

While eggnogged mouths
Stumble loudly over choruses
Of "Silent Night"
And tinsel-tainted youngsters
Prey for a piece of good will
In their x-mas stockings.

Laurie Troudt

Holly Hall

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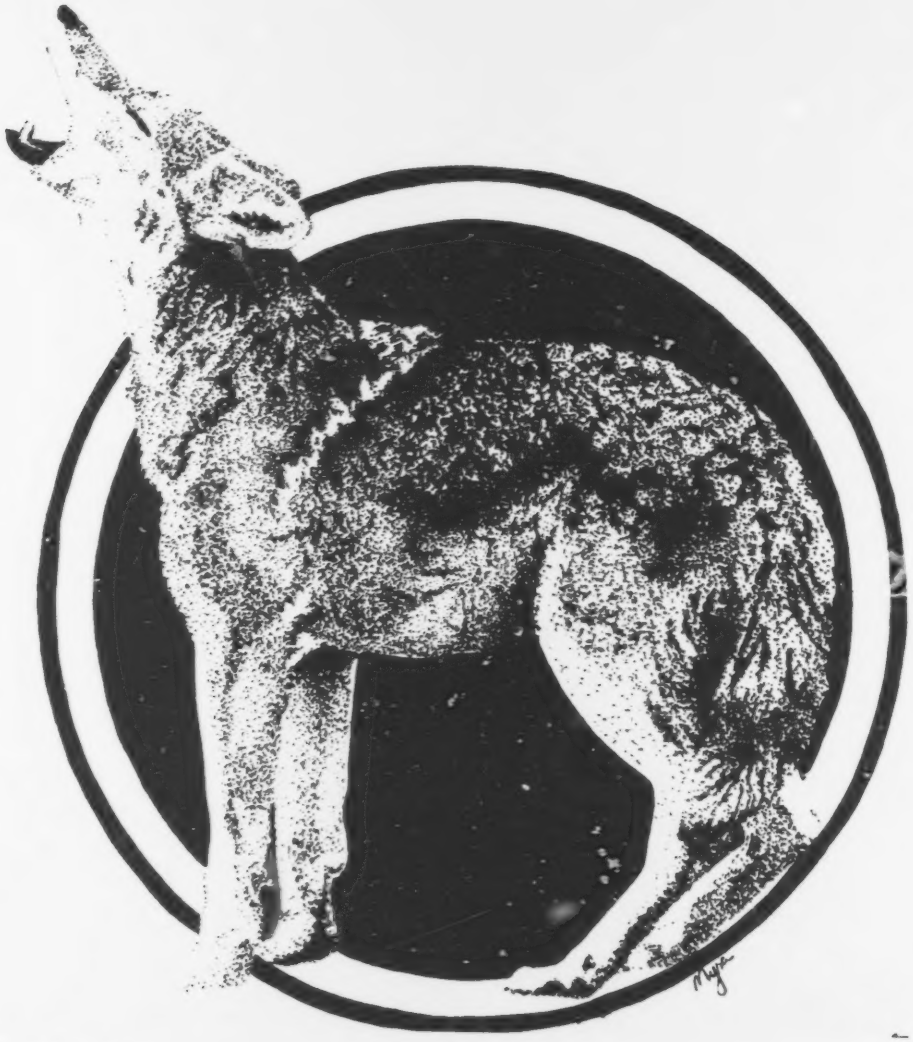

Myra Schroeder

The Monster

Sid sat alone in his room doing nothing in particular. Here he was, in his own home, among his favorite possessions and dirty clothes, on his bed, relaxing, and he still felt uncomfortable. It was his job. Exactly when or where his feelings about his job or Mr. Jones in specific began to change he was not sure. As he sat cross-legged on his bed, he reevaluated his feelings about the work he was doing in the library. He remembered that for months all he could think about and plan for was the job

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he hoped to get in the library. The public library only accepted the very best of local students, who also had moderate knowledge of the Library of Congress filing system and *Books in Print*. Sid thought at one time that the people in his clique in school would see him in a prestigious position, working in the library. Sid chuckled at the thought of his job appearing prestigious to him at first. The image of the well read high school intellectual who so fittingly worked in the library faded only after a few days on the job. Doing a librarian's dirty work was hardly glamorous and did not win him the recognition from his peers that he expected. "So you work in the library," they would say in unimpressed tones.

Then there was Mr. Jones. The very thought of him made Sid uneasy. If it wasn't for Mr. Jones, Sid thought, he could very easily handle the *Reader's Guide* band *Books in Print*. They could not intimidate him like Mr. Jones. They could not make him feel as insignificant as a dust mote. Sid wondered how a man fifty-nine years old, who barely had any hair, and who sounded like a leaking balloon when he was angry could make him squirm when he was alone in his bedroom. "Doing a good job means avoiding the criticism of Mr. Jones," Sid had once told his father. But Sid knew that Mr. Jones was only doing his job when he was hard on him. The work in the library demanded a lot of time and effort, and Sid's social life reflected this. His not so cheery thoughts were interrupted by the entrance of his mother. Her small frame and bright face put him in a playful mood.

"I wish you would knock," he said playfully.

"Mothers don't have to knock. It's an unwritten law. Anyway, Pete's on the phone," she said in the space of one breath, not giving him the time to argue back. Reluctantly, Sid unfolded his long legs from his crouched position on the bed and made his way to the phone. When he got to the phone, Pete's voice greeted him.

"How's the librarian?"

"Tired. Really tired. What are you up to?"

"Well, me an' a couple of other guys were wonderin' if an intellectual like you would like to catch a movie?"

"I wish I could. I have to study for semester exams."

"You're seriously gonna study for exams on a Friday night."

"I have to work all day tomorrow and then on Sunday. I promised my gramma I would come over and shovel snow for her," Sid dolefully replied.

"Geez, what a stiff. You can think about me impressin' every girl in sight at the movies while you're studying," Pete said.

"I don't have time to do your fantasizing for you," countered Sid.

"You're a bum," said Pete, and with that, hung up. Depressed, Sid plopped his lanky frame into a chair by the phone. He had not been out on a Friday night since he got the job in November. It was now January. His senior year, his prime, was going down the tubes, he thought, because a little old man made him get to work at 6:30 every Saturday morning. "Friday nights are out of the picture as far as I'm concerned," Sid reflected.

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Sid's father almost tripped over Sid as he sat in the chair. "Why the long face?" he asked.

"It's been over two month's since I've been out on a Friday night. Mr. Jones makes me come in two hours before the library opens on every Saturday morning. I have to go to bed early on Friday so I can be almost alive when I get to work!" said Sid, nearly shouting.

"I don't think you have to worry about becoming a recluse just yet," said his father. "You shouldn't sacrifice all of the spare time the way you do to that job."

But I need the spending money," said Sid.

"And you never have the chance to spend it. Talk to Mr. Jones tomorrow. He can't be so hard hearted as to rob you of a social life. And incidentally, your grades haven't been up to par lately. Work keeps you from hitting the books too, huh?"

"Yea. I don't have the time to study as much as I should."

"Lay that on Mr. Jones too. Maybe he can do something about reducing your hours?" advised his father.

"That's a good idea," Sid replied. "Thanks Dad." Sid watched his tall, burly father walk down the hall away from him. He sat alone in the shadowy entry way, considering what his father had said to him. He could not see Mr. Jones as the type who would understand the lack of a social life as acceptable grounds for working fewer hours, but an appeal that his grades were suffering just might sway him.

After attempting to study for a couple of hours, Sid finally decided to call it a night. Concentrating on his homework was futile because his mind kept wandering toward the confrontation with Mr. Jones the following morning. Trying to sleep was almost as useless as studying. Visions of Mr. Jones danced in Sid's head. He could picture Mr. Jones sitting on a judge's bench and reading off the charges brought against him by Mr. Jones himself and the library using community. The verdict: Sid had irrevocably wronged both of the plaintiffs, and was sentenced to a life of shelf reading—the most detested and inhumane of all library tasks.

At 5:45 am, Sid's alarm dutifully and unmercifully awoke him. The first thought on his mind was, "Mr. Jones, oh my God."

As he stumbled toward the bathroom, nothing but the thought of his confrontation with Mr. Jones was on his mind. Every brushstroke was done with Mr. Jones in mind. Sid even went as far as to shave his beardless face, all in hopes that it would aid somehow in his appeal. Then, most important was his choice of wardrobe. Mr. Jones frowned upon casual dress. He not only frowned upon casual dress, he made an effort to humiliate the culprits who had the gall to dress too informally. But he also wanted employees not to overdress, as it was pretentious. This left Sid in quite a predicament. He was especially conscious of the impression he was to make today, and did not want Mr. Jones' attention on any incongruities in dress or physical appearance. After ten minutes of indecision, Sid chose what he usually wore to work: corduroy jeans and an unpretentious, labor-proof shirt. After checking his short brown hair in the mirror a last time, he got in his car and left.

By the time Sid got to the library, his stomach was gnawing at him like an ulcer.

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He drove so carefully on the way to the library (so as to not get a ticket and jeopardize any infinitesimal amount of respect that Mr. Jones might have for him) that he ended up being late. On his entrance to the library, Sid's tension increased. The familiar dusty smells and oversized shelves of books did nothing to welcome him. Mr. Jones was already working only five minutes into the day. Sid nearly shuddered when he entered the door and saw his antagonist sitting at his desk, looking as unmerciful as ever. Mr. Jones spoke to him immediately, "Sidney, come here." Sid felt his throat constrict and his palms became instantly moist.

"Yes, Mr. Jones," said Sid as he approached the desk of his accuser.

"Are you aware that you are late for the second time since the commencement of your employment here?" Mr. Jones stated and not asked.

Sid gave him the expected reply, "Yes sir, I'm sorry."

"Yes, I suppose you are," said Mr. Jones in none too kind tones. "I expect you to make an effort to be punctual from now on. Do you understand me?"

Sid replied that he understood, and then Mr. Jones excused him to his work. Sid was, of course, assigned to shelf read. The intimidating feeling that he felt in the presence of Mr. Jones soon changed into stifled anger. As shelf reading was no great tax on the intelligence or attention of Sid, his mind wandered boldly to how much he actually disliked Mr. Jones. He rationalized, "I'm at least five inches taller than Mr. Jones at 5' 11". I outweigh him by at least thirty pounds. Sure, I'm thin, but if we two got in the ring, I could tire him out for a couple of rounds, and then smash his face to a pulp!" Sid was surprised at the violence of his thoughts. However, he decided not to hit Mr. Jones unless Mr. Jones hit him first or insulted his mother or something. After not too much contemplation, he also decided not to ask Mr. Jones about reducing his hours until the end of the day. "Maybe," he thought, "if I work exceptionally hard, he'll forget about my being late. Otherwise, I don't know what I'll do."

The library closed at 2:00 pm on Saturdays, and Sid thought time would end before closing time. When two finally did arrive, Sid suddenly remembered that he was to talk to Mr. Jones. Mustering all his courage, he prepared himself for the assault on Mr. Jones. This time he approached the desk under his own choice. Hearing the strained control in his own voice, he asked, "Mr. Jones, may I speak with you?"

"You may, Sidney."

"The thing is, Mr. Jones, that with all the hours I've been working lately, I haven't had much time for anything else. I haven't seen several of my friends for weeks, but most of all, my schoolwork has also been suffering. What I really mean to ask is, is there any way I can get my hours reduced?"

It was hard, but Sid had done it, and now it was time for Mr. Jones.

"Sidney," replied Mr. Jones, "you are a good employee."

Sid was flabbergasted. Mr. Jones had never said anything of that sort to him before.

"The library has come to depend on you," he continued. "As for your social

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life, I'm sorry; but as for your grades, we only pick the best of students for the positions here. Because you are such a good student, you are expected to pick up the slack, so to speak. I know the job is demanding, but you only have two options: stay with us or quit. Personally, I believe it would be very dishonorable and not to mention immature for you to quit. I'm sorry, but I cannot change your hours. Also, consider what an inconvenience it would be to the library to hold interviews, decide on, and train a new employee. Please think it over, and don't disappoint me."

Sid was virtually in shock at the new Mr. Jones. He had been almost kind, polite, and had even treated him as a near equal. "Well, almost an equal. I can't expect too much too soon," thought Sid. Mr. Jones was not the monster that he had supposed. He had demonstrated a quality not ordinarily found in monsters, understanding.

That night at home, Sid explained to his parents what had happened that day. He asked him for their opinions on the subject, and they replied "Sid, whatever you decide, we'll support you."

"Nice sentiment," thought Sid, "but not very practical." Sid knew it was a question of if he should stay for the sake of the library, or leave for his own sanity. As he looked at the possibilities, Sid knew that the job at the library would not be forever. Sid did not plan to shelve books for a career. He was looking for something a little more promising. The library would have to hire a new employee to take his place eventually. It would be just as large of an inconvenience then, as now. Either way, Sid also realized, he would be a quitter. He would either quit on Mr. Jones, or his friends and school. Sid knew he was expendable in the library's eyes, but not his friends'.

With a monumentous sigh of relief, Sid knew his course. He planned that after school on Monday he would dress in the appropriate attire, look presentable, and tell Mr. Jones ever so sincerely that he was leaving the employment of the afore mentioned party. On entering the kitchen to inform his parents of the bittersweet news, his mother met him with the telephone receiver and said, "It's Pete."

Sid took the phone smiling and said, "Pete, I feel like catching a movie. What do you say?"

Mike Williams

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Encouragement

A poor player struts and frets
his hour upon the stage.
The audience sits in the left front row seat.
The curtain falls.
A fury of applause from the audience
echoes from the walls.
The ears on stage receive the sound
as if from a throng—
signifying everything.

Myra Schroeder

Alcoholic

He drank the milk of human kindness—
Lapped it up like a great-hearted cat.
Filled with its sweet warmth,
He ruled Glamis,
Defended his country bravely.
Then, he tasted a new brew
From the vintage of ambition, and
Drowned his conscience.
Intoxicated,
He followed the invisible dagger
To catch the nearest way.

Myra Schroeder

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The Climb

The rope pulls taut, we fall, we start the climb
To rise beyond the soil-stains of the ground.
We will commitment's first step upward, bound
With hope to those love-cords of faith that bind
Secure our spirits, bodies, souls and minds.
No turning back. With vision we are found
To strive for joy and truth—the victor's crown.
We strain to grow; we grope for strength and find
Cloud-piercing cliffs provoking intense fright,
Exceeding pressure's limits beyond talk—
Then know we must face death to reunite.
We hang by faith alone in mortal shock,
To choose obedience we have to fight:
Repelled to self we stand upon our Rock.

LuAnne Sugar

Shadows

Rest is a friend
Taken often for granted.
When mind is buffeted like a pilotless ship
By winds of burden and care,
He offers respite,
Alluring nothingness.

Death is ignorantly shunned and avoided.
False pretenses of black and pain eternal cloud mortal reason.
He walks hand in hand with rest,
Offering escape from this heavy human shell.

Mike Williams

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Laurie Troudt

The Tigress

See the tigress
As she sees us—
Distorted images
Moving towards her.
Not secure,
Whether kind or brutal.
She stalks in amazement
Awaiting future movements.
Crackling noises befriend her ears.
What is she thinking?
Time cannot erase her thoughts.
Why is she looking at us so?
Not knowing,
In protection of her young.

Kathy Dillon

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Winter's False Mourning

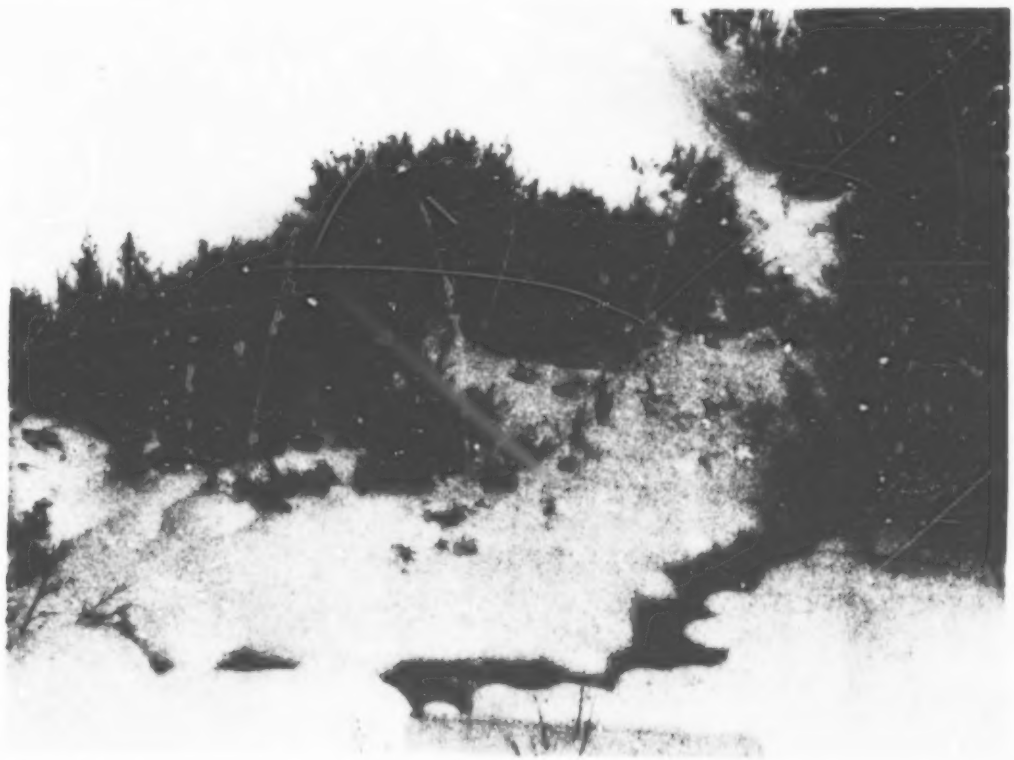
Foreshadowed by a burning stench
Of frozen hickory and pine,
She arrives—
Premeditated black
On creeping legs—
Like the widow,
Seducing the earth
In her blanket of white darkness,
Then draining
Her paralyzed lover's
Breath.

Laurie Troudt

Vanity's Price

The willow bows
To sweep the ground
Beneath its snowy gown,
Cautious not to drag
The crystal fringe
Or ivory powdered hem,
Standing poised
In view of all,
  While the brilliant fabric's
  Crushing weight
  Bends and breaks
  the tree's proud limbs.

Laurie Troudt



Charla Haase

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". . .Arrows Of Outrageous Fortune. . ."

The slings propel from each alternative
And strike. Decision mars, molests the mind.
Fate wanes in light of conscious choice; it gives
To us volition, but not means to find
The answers. It is difficult to weigh
Each side with an uncalibrated scale—
The conscience. When vengeance (His father's slain)
Arises as the question, the Prince fails
To act with haste. The taking of his life
Or murder of another; there's his choice.
To be or not to be, here lies his strife.
He chooses life, pain echoes in his voice;
Oh what a heavy heartache to decide
And wish that conscious choice could be denied.

Kelly Mateer

"Light Denied"

"A yoke"—claimed Milton of his light denied—
Though minor inconvenience. Poets view
The world in light immeasurable by
Dull, mortal eyes, and therefore Milton proved
His talent wisely spent, for poets' words
In beauty, form and order far surpass
Reality (with truer color). More
Advantage came from that denied than loss:
Enlightenment, Patience's reward. But to those
Whose pupils mirror inner darkness, what
Can rays of beauty's words reveal? Their yoke,
A concrete weight of ignorance, is but
A gravestone. That denial from inside,
Which serves no God, no man, is death to hide.

Laurie Troudt

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Kevin Capra

Double Take

Often when I read poetry,
I get hurt.
Someone has stolen my idea.
Though my paper and pen
are lacking,
it is mine,
I felt it first!

Then there are times
when I have to read
other people's words
to realize
what I feel.

Lola Trevino

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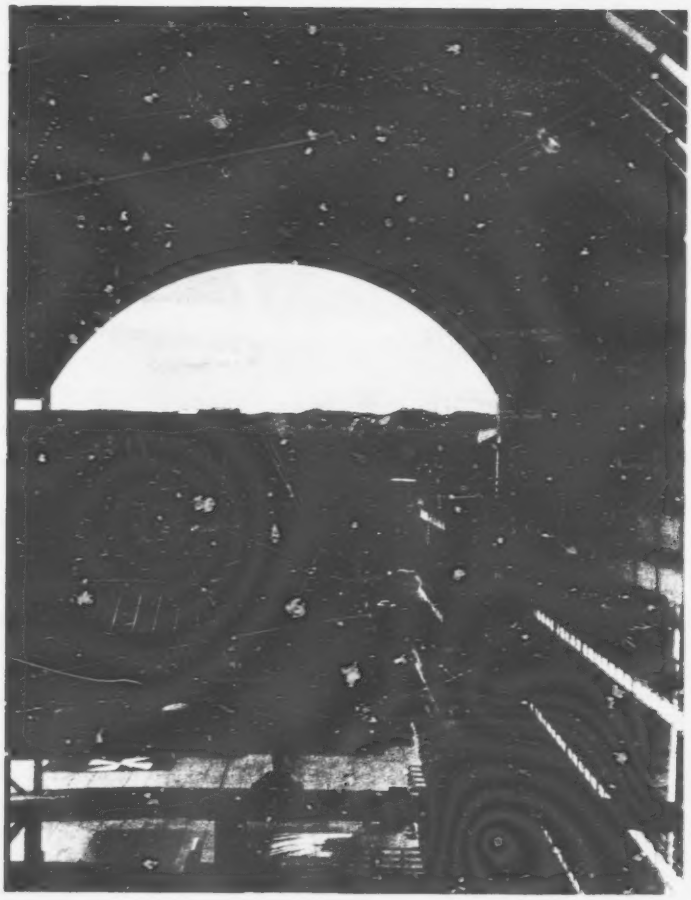

Kevin Capra

The Living City

The lights shine as part of a never-ending horizon,
Breathing with the people who dwell within.
Yet to see more than a block is impossible from inside The Apple.
Tall buildings beautifully clutter the surroundings.
It beats as a heart for many more hearts,
A trading-port of ideas,
A breeding ground of life,
Life itself.

Richard Ransom

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Glen Beede

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Where the Treasure Is

Carelessly,
a man drops his
dreams and dollars
into the bank of earthly life.
Confident
that no thief can break through
nor plunder,
he takes his ease,
eats,
drinks,
and makes merry
while the Master Thief
steals his treasure with his life,
and the filling of the bank
becomes its emptying.

Myra Schroeder

A Hand of Measure

Patting and caressing,
A chill follows from within,
Fondling the fingertips,
And nibbling at the nails.
Clinching tightly, he stops
All circulation.
Soon the body grows old.
Now arousing warmth
Still left within.
'Tis the touch of time.

Gretchen Bauer

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"However Measured or Far Away"

In the clamor and hum
of a high school cafeteria,
friends gather with friends
for a break in studies.
She enters and makes her presence known
to "the gang" in the corner.
Eyes roll and exchange
looks of irritation.
She cracks a joke.
Nobody laughs.
A tense, semi-tolerant air prevails.
Conversation moves around the table,
but skips her.
She leaves.
Snickers follow.

Myra Schroeder

Glen Beede

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Linda Bliss

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Runaways

The warm air whipped through her long blonde hair as she pulled off the graduation cap that had been pinned so tightly to her head; she paused only briefly before tossing it out the window. She kicked off the high heels that squeezed her toes until they turned blue and tossed them in the back seat. The open highway enticed her feelings of freedom—no cars, no curves, no parents; she slammed the car into third gear. They told her it was her car, so she could do as she pleased. She reached over and turned on the radio. A tune by the Beach Boys came on and she couldn't resist turning it up full blast and singing along, "fun, fun, fun till her daddy takes her T-bird away,"—slightly out of key, but too loud to notice. She unzipped the graduation robe which she had almost forgotten she still wore, and after leaning out of the car window and looking both directions, tossed it into a clump of trees. The dress she wore underneath was pink, baby pink, the color her mother had picked out. The style was her own choosing, short sleeves, ruffled collar, and the skirt was moderate in length. She reached up and unbottoned the first two buttons, allowing the breeze to circulate. The smell of damp grass and sweet flowers tickled her nostrils. She laughed out loud.

She drove west until the highway slowed into a lazy street. There were houses on either side. People wearing shorts and big straw hats slaved to keep their lawns green and trim. She drove past several neighborhoods, her radio blaring, until she came to a luscious green park filled with trees and swings and flowers that streched as far as she could see. She pulled into the parking lot, which was empty, and turned off the radio and the ignition. She opened the door and stepped onto the hot pavement with her stockinged feet. The heat of the blacktop scorched and made her scurry on tiptoes to the grass in front of the car. She brushed her long tangled curls out of her face and leaned back on the hood of her graduation present, a silver Honda Civic, her arms spread open to catch the sun's rays. "If they could see me now," she thought, referring to her parents. "Nancy, put on your shoes, button your collar, and sit up straight!" She stood up and walked out onto the grass. The warm dew soaked through her stockings and the sun beat down, warming her stll-tense muscles. She straightened her dress and laid down on her back, planning to spend the rest of her life there. She stretched out her arms and breathed deeply and slowly, feeling relaxed but not tired. There was no place she would rather be.

While Nancy lay there, she could not help but think about the day's events—the serpent in her paradise. The warmth of her bed of grass put some distance between her and her disappointment. (Her face felt red so she rolled over on her side.) For an entire year, her dreams of the future revolved around Boston University. She wanted to go to college out of state and heard that it was one of the best. A friend of hers had been going there for a year, and told her all

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about it. She had read every bit of literature, looked at every brochure, and written to every sorority available. There was almost nothing she did not know about Boston University. Her parents were opposed from the beginning. They had given her every argument for staying at home; all of them involved cost. If she stayed in state, she could commute and save all the cost of room and board. The reason Nancy heard was, "Mama mustn't let baby wander out of her reach." She thought of her parents as the most overbearing, overprotective people in the world. Sometimes she wished she were not an only child. She knew the intent behind her graduation present before either of them spoke. "Thank you for the car, but that doesn't change my plans for college," she had told them when they presented it to her a week before. Nancy had gone so far as not driving it just to show them she could not be bought.

The week was traumatic, filled with tears, shouts, accusations, and feelings of guilt--all of which only strengthened her desire for Boston University. During the week, their hold on her tightened to suffocating degrees. At one point, she thought her father would actually spank her and send her to bed without any supper (after which, her mother would have taken her into her arms and rocked her to sleep.) Nancy could have just died when her mother called Terry Jensen's mom to make sure no alcohol would be served at his graduation party, and them inquired as to whether parents were also invited.

She yawned and rolled over on her other side. Nothing really mattered now; she was not even graduating, a decision she thought would make her parents very happy. As she rested, her problems dissipated into the warm breeze and she dozed off for a short while. A rustling in the bushes startled her out of her blissful nap. She sat up. A blur of blue jeans and a red striped shirt was moving stealthily behind a hedge; a blue baseball cap peaked over the top. She stood up slowly, hurried to the other end of the hedge and crouched down in silence. She knelt there until the blur came closer, then rose up in its path. The child did not notice her until he almost stepped on her feet. He reared up excitedly, eyes as big as golf balls, backed up slowly, then started to run. Nancy reached out and caugtht him by the back of his shirt. "Just what do you think you're doing, fellow, sneaking up on me like that?" The boy struggled to free himself.

"I wasn't sneaking up on you, Lady! Just let me go! Don't take me back! Please don't make me go back!"

Nancy kneeled down to get a closer look at the boy. He was about six or seven years old. He had dark hair that hung below his ears and in his eyes which were big and brown and looked as if he had been crying. "If I let you go, will you promise not to run off?"

"I promise, Lady, just let me go!"

Nancy loosened her grip and before she could stand up, the boy went running past her. She jumped to her feet and ran after him, forgetting how fast little boys can run, especially if they are being chased by a girl. She followed him through bushes, around trees, over flower beds, until she was on his tail. She tried to reach

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him, but twisted her ankle and ended up on the ground in a heap. The boy was soon out of sight. She rested from the chase before standing and limping towards the place where she had begun.

"Lady, hey, Lady."

She heard a shy voice from behind and turned around. The boy stood there staring at his feet. "I'm sorry I made you fall down." He turned to leave again.

"Please stay!" she called after him, "I promise not to take you back!" She did not know what she was promising, but was beginning to enjoy his company.

"Promise? Swear to God on a stack of Bibles?"

"Yes, I promise," she said. The boy came back and walked Nancy to the place where they had met.

"My name's Nancy. What's yours?" There was no reply. "The silent type, huh? Let's see if I can get you to talk. Do you like baseball?" The boy's face brightened up. "Well, I don't. How about school? Do you like school?" Nancy teased. The boy was not laughing. The look on his face returned to dismal. "Cheer up kid. You'll be graduating all too soon. That's when the trouble really hits." There was still no reply. "So, you like baseball,. . ." said Nancy, getting desperate for a sign of life. "Do you like anything else?" She thought she heard a mumble. She leaned closer, "I didn't catch that."

"FRANKY!" shouted the boy.

"Oh! you like Franky!"

"No! That's my name, Franky!" he shouted as if she were dumb.

"Oh! Franny," she teased.

"FRANKY!"

"Freddy? it's nice to meet you Fred." She extended her hand.

"FRANKY! F-R-A-N-K-Y! FRANKY!"

"Oh, I'm sorry. I got you that time." The boy sighed in relief. "Mary!" said Nancy. He raised his fists in exasperation. Nancy laughed. He picked up a handful of grass and tossed it at her. She fell over as if she were wounded and both giggled until their sides ached. "So tell me, Mary, do you live around here?" He looked down, ignoring the question. "Do you go to school around here?" There was still silence. "Are you supposed to be in school right now?" Nancy realised she was hitting on something. "That's it, you're playing hooky, aren't you?" He turned his head the other way, and she knew she was losing him. "I've got a great idea. I've been asking all the questions, now it's your turn. Go ahead, ask anything you like."

He scrunched up his face in concentration and put his chin on his fist. After a long hesitation he looked up. "Do your parents love you?"

Nancy was caught off guard. "Uh, well, of course they do. All parents love their children."

He looked disappointed at the response. "Mine don't."

Nancy didn't quite know what to say. "Well of course they do!" she said assuredly.

"No, they don't. If they did love me, they wouldn't send me away to a

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millyterry schoo! where I don't know anyone and I don't even like it." His eyes welled up with tears.

"Did you tell them how you feel about it, Franky? I'm sure they're doing what's best for you."

"They wouldn't listen. They don't care. They hate me; they just want to get rid of me."

"I'm sure your parents don't hate you. I mean I'm sure they love you very much."

"Then why do they make me hurt?" Franky asked.

Nancy wasn't sure. "Maybe they just don't know how to show their love in the right ways. Maybe they need a little understanding too."

"But they're s'posed to know. They're s'posed to do things right. They're my parents! They're grown ups!"

"Not even grown ups have all the answers, Franky. Sometimes they even make mistakes." Nancy's realizations were unfolding.

"Well I'm not going back if they think they can make me go away."

"Do you think that's the right thing to do?"

"Yes."

"Don't you think your parents have feelings too?"

"No."

Nancy could see she was getting nowhere. She thought real hard, "Have you ever been to a baseball game?"

"Yes," he said with big eyes.

"Who took you?"

"My dad."

"Oh, yes. That sounds like a hateful gesture to me. Did he buy you the baseball cap too?" He nodded. "The nerve of that man, doing those terrible things to you. How dare he!"

Fanky smiled despite himself. "That doesn't prove anything."

"You're right. People always give presents to people they hate. Take the Trojan horse for example." She pulled the cap off of his head and looked inside. "I'd just make sure it isn't booby trapped."

"Hey, give it back!" he shouted.

"Now why would you want something from someone who hates you?"

"Just give it back to me, Nancy, I'm not joking."

". . .Especially if it's booby trapped. Sometimes these hateful parents get sneaky about these things."

He grabbed the hat out of her hand and replaced it on his head. "It's not booby trapped."

"I know, and I bet he doesn't hate you, does he?" Franky shrugged. "I bet your mother doesn't either."

He was silent for a while. "Maybe not, but why don't they want me?"

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"I'm sure they want you. Running away doesn't solve anything. I just bet your parents are worried sick. You should let me take you home."

"No. No, you promised! You swore! You can't take me back! You just can't."

"Oh dear, I did promise, didn't I? And it's getting late; I have a graduation to attend. I better just leave you here." She stood up and straightened her dress, brushing the grass off, "It's been nice meeting you, Franky. Now remember, whatever you do, try to keep warm at night. Cover up with newspaper if you have to, because it gets pretty cold in the park at night." She started to walk away very slowly, then turned, "And if you get hungry, there's always pigeon food; if all those pigeons can live off that stuff, I'm sure a little boy can." She started walking again. "And if you get lonely, don't talk to strangers. Not all of them are as nice as I am." She continued walking towards the car.

"Nancy!"

She spun around. Franky just sat there picking at the grass. "Yes!" asked Nancy.

"Well,. . . I was thinking. . ."

"Oh, don't just sit there, come on!"

Franky smiled and followed her slowly. They both got into the car reluctantly. She started the car and pulled out of the lot. "You'll have to show me where you live." He pointed to the right. Neither one of them said much on the way home.

Nancy pulled up in front of the house that Franky pointed out as his and stopped. She looked at him tenderly. "Tell your parents how you feel this time. Give them a chance. Make them respect you. No more running off, o.k.?"

"I promise!" said Franky. He reached over and grabbed Nancy around the neck in a grateful embrace. "Goodbye, Nancy."

"Goodbye, Franky, and good luck." He opened the door hesitantly and shuffled up the sidewalk with his hands in his pockets. She waited until she saw the door open and a woman with long dark hair sweep Franky off his feet and into her arms, then drove away. She still had forty-five minutes until graduation rehearsal. She didn't have a cap or gown, but was confident they would let her participate. As she drove, she anticipated the reunion with her own parents. She wasn't quite sure how she would tell them that she would be going to school in state after all, but she hoped they would be understanding and not gloat. Nancy knew she would have to confront them about how they had been treating her, and maybe just by doing that she could gain their respect for her as an adult. Maybe she would make them believe she was staying in state for them and not even tell them about the letter she had received that afternoon, telling her that her request for financial aid at Boston University had been received too late and therefore rejected. She reached over and picked up the crinkled envelope addressed to herself. She wadded it up and threw it out the window; she was through running.

Laurie Troudt

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Apple

It hangs
Plump,
Ripe,
Waiting to be plucked,
And savored,
And enjoyed.
It causes
Deliberation,
Consideration,
And a restless second look.
Pleasure shines
In the blood red globe.
It is forbidden,
And so
Plucked from the tree.
Firm and solid it rests in her palm
As it is lifted slowly to her mouth
For the luxurious bite.
Sweet bitterness fills,
And then
The sting of
A sharp ache, and
The power of the poisonous curse
Overcomes.

Myra Schroeder

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Myra Schroeder

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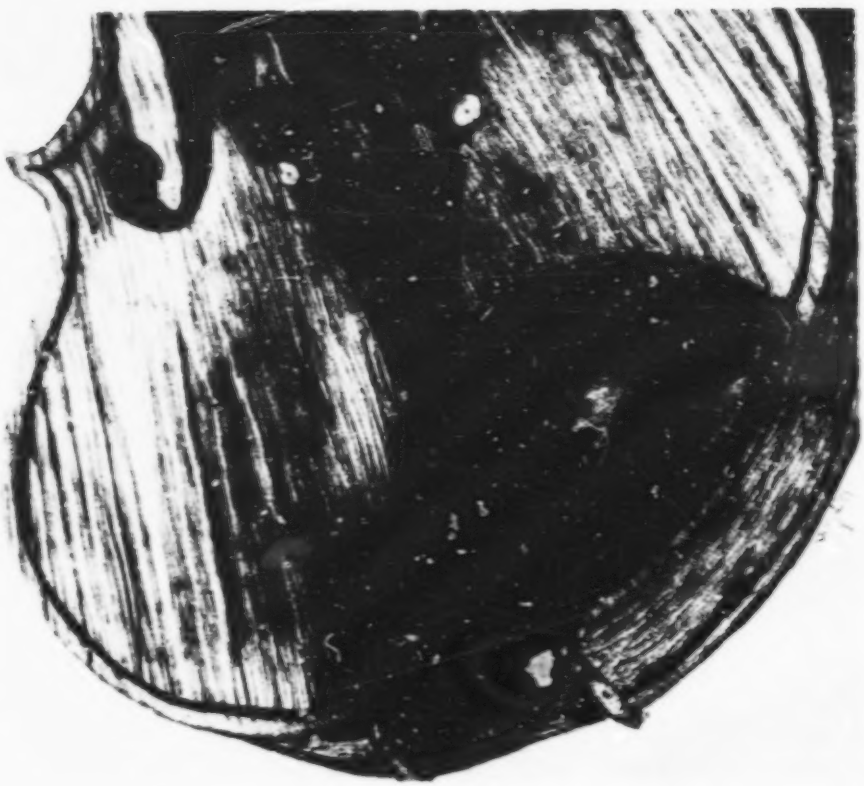
Autumn's Splendor

All of autumn's splendor
was aroused
by a soft breeze
that swept and ruffled
dried leaves
across the ground.
A rhythmic tune
of the crisp dried leaves
echoed in the ears of everyone.
An everlasting picture was formed
by all of autumn's splendor.

Kathy DeWitt



Myra Schroeder

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Myra Schroeder

Release

Stormy heart
Meets clean paper.
Restless hand
Raises furious brush.
Intense strokes
Create a masterpiece.
Quieted heart
Leaves stormy paper.

Myra Schroeder

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Benefactors

Mr., Mrs. Ben Brown

KRKS Radio
990 AM

Richard Ransom

James and Jean Scalmanini

Mrs. Betty Troudt

Amy L. Williams

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Mrs. Libby Schovajsa

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